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DE' QUINCEY

THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN

AND

REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, BY

V. H. COLLINS

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PREFACE

DE QUINCEY'S fame has crystallized so closely round the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* that he is often regarded solely as a reflective and analytical writer. The two pieces in the present volume exhibit his narrative and descriptive powers. Both are marked by a simplicity and a directness that make them a very happy introduction to his writings. Indeed, for sustained vivacity, frolicsome humour, and fullness of incident, *The Spanish Military Nun* stands unique among his works. It does not, however, seem ever to have been reissued except in the collective editions of De Quincey's works and in a two-volume edition of selections edited over twenty years ago by David Masson and now out of print.

The briefest of notes have been written on historical and literary allusions, and on a few other points that appeared to need explanation.

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INTRODUCTION

THOMAS DE QUINCEY was born at Manchester in 1785. His father was a merchant of good position and of literary tastes, who was compelled on account of bad health to spend much of his time abroad. Thomas inherited from him a weakly constitution. Of a shy and sensitive disposition, he was from early childhood subject to dreams that pursued him vividly into his waking life. When he was but seven, his father was brought home to die; only a short time before, his eldest sister, Elizabeth, to whom he was much attached, had died: her death impressed him deeply, and in his memoirs he relates a solemn vision that came on him while standing in the death-chamber. His mother was devoted to her children, but the sternness of her character prevented complete sympathy with a nature so different as that of her son.

His childhood was spent in the country, but he preferred burying himself in books to sharing the games of other boys and the pranks of a boisterous elder brother. His education was entrusted to a tutor until he was twelve, when the family moved to Bath. He entered the Grammar School there,

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and gained a reputation for his knowledge of Latin and Greek: 'That boy,' said his master, 'could harangue an Athenian mob better than you or I could address an English one.' After two years at Bath, and a short time at a private boarding school, he was sent to Manchester Grammar School, with the idea of obtaining a scholarship and proceeding to Oxford. He was not happy in his new surroundings. Life in a large industrial city weighed on his spirits; he found his companions uncongenial and the lessons monotonous; and his health was affected by lack of exercise—for, though not athletic, he already had that love of long walks, alone or with a companion, which lasted all his life. In vain the boy begged his mother to take him away from school, and one day, with a resolution that seems strangely in contrast with his timid disposition, he started off—a volume of Euripides in one pocket and of an English writer in another—and abandoning his first intention of presenting himself to the poet Wordsworth, for whom he had conceived an enthusiastic admiration, he trudged the forty miles to Chester where his family were now living.

The intercession of an uncle prevented his mother from insisting on his return, and he was allowed to carry out a project for a walking tour in Wales. But his leaving Manchester Grammar School meant, that he could no longer obtain the scholarship on which his mother had been relying to assist her son to the University. The lad, however,

had set his heart on Oxford. After some months of rambling in Wales, he broke off communication with his family, and made his way to London, to raise a loan on some money that he would inherit when he came of age. The negotiations dragged on, and his resources were soon exhausted. For several months he endured the severest privations, dependent on charity for food, and often reduced to sleeping on doorsteps. On one occasion, when almost dead from starvation and exposure, he owed his life to a poor girl called Ann, whose acquaintance he had made in his wanderings through the London streets, and who succoured him with food 'paid out of her own humble purse, at a time when she had scarcely wherewithal to purchase the bare necessities of life, and when she could have no reason to expect that he would ever be able to reimburse her'. In after years his thoughts and dreams constantly reverted to this incident, and he counted it the 'heaviest affliction' of his life that when later he was in a position to help her, all his efforts to trace her through the 'mighty labyrinths' of London were vain.

An encounter with a friend led to his leaving London and returning to his family. After much consultation it was arranged that he should be allowed to go to Oxford on a small allowance, and in 1803 he entered Worcester College. Here he lived a quiet, studious life, with a reputation among the few who knew him for his conversational powers and prodigious information. Unfortunately, about this

time, during an attack of neuralgia, he first learnt to take opium, and sowed the seeds of a habit that at one time seemed likely to ruin him in mind and body.

He left Oxford without obtaining his degree, through refusing for some unknown reason to present himself for the oral part of the examination. His residence there had done little to alter his solitary habits, but henceforth his life was to be brightened by friendship. He made the acquaintance of Coleridge (to whom we find him a few years later sending an anonymous gift of £300); was by him introduced to Wordsworth and Southey; and in 1809, at the age of twenty-four, took up his abode at Grasmere, in the Lake District, in order to be near his new friends. He settled down into the life of a student, secured by a small income from the necessity of making his living.

The years that followed were uneventful, until in 1816 he married Margaret Simpson, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer. The marriage was a happy one, both in itself and for its indirect results. He had been growing accustomed to larger and larger doses of opium, and had reached a state in which he dreaded to go to sleep on account of the dreadful nightmares that beset him, while by day he was reduced to mental paralysis and 'suicidal despondency'. Shortly before his marriage he had succeeded in reducing the amount of his daily dose, but he soon became more than ever the slave of the drug. Now, however, the need of providing for

his family forced him to make another effort—this time with more lasting results, although there were still to be relapses before finally he ‘unwound the accursed chain’. The same necessity drove him to work, and in 1821 the first instalment of the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* appeared in the *London Magazine*.

Its success was immediate, and from that time De Quincey was a constant contributor to the magazines. His writings fill sixteen volumes, and maintain almost without exception a high level of workmanship—though the standard by which one compares them is an extraordinarily high one, for our literature shows no finer examples of ‘impassioned prose’ than passages in some of his essays. He ranged at ease over the whole field of history and literature, ancient and modern: the list of his essays includes such diverse subjects as Homer, Kant’s philosophy, Joan of Arc, Freemasonry, Roman meals. His wide reading and immense memory, combined with an insatiable curiosity, show themselves also in his treatment of a subject. He revels in tracking a question into its backwaters, and will interrupt the main current of his argument for several pages in order to follow up a minute issue that has accidentally emerged during the discussion. Connected with this quality there goes an almost fatal fluency, that even his scholarship sometimes barely redeems from the charge of verbiage. Indeed his reading, though wide, was desultory, and his mind, in spite of its

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analytical and logical faculty, was averse from prolonged research and reflection. In his historical and philosophical essays he shines rather as a brilliant controversialist than as a contributor to original thought on fundamental questions, and his fame has with justice clustered round his more imaginative writings. The bent of his mind inclined his interest towards the vast, the extraordinary, and the dramatic. The two articles in this volume are instances in point: one, the story of a nun, masquerading as a man, and taking part in wild scenes of adventure and violence; the other, the spectacle of a whole nation migrating across a continent to return to its allegiance under a former lord.

The publication of the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* marked the turning-point in his career. He had discovered the work for which he was fitted; his pen now assured him an adequate income; and the story of the rest of his long life would be chiefly a chronicle of his various writings, and of the fortunes of his family who shared with literature his interest and his love. In 1830 he moved to Scotland, and took a house near Edinburgh, doing his writing, however, in rooms in the city itself. Many stories are told of his eccentricity. It was his custom to accumulate books in his rooms until no space was left; he would then turn the key in the lock, and move to another house, sooner than be at the trouble of moving his belongings: at one time he was paying rent for four different houses. He was not a person (as one of his

daughters puts it) 'for nervous people to live with': in the evenings, when he was in his family circle, it was 'the commonest incident for some one to look up from book or work, to say casually, "Papa, your hair is on fire," of which a calm "Is it, my love?" and a hand rubbing out the blaze was all the notice taken'.

He had a small fragile body, and his friend Shadworth Hodgson quotes the description of the poet in Thomson's *Castle of Indolence* as exactly fitting him :—

A little Druid wight,
Of withered aspect; but his eye was keen,
With sweetness mixed. In russet brown bedight
He crept along, unpromising of mien.
Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair.

After the death of his wife in 1837, his eldest daughter Margaret assumed the management of his house and took the place of mother to the other five children. For nearly a quarter of a century more his energy in writing was unremitting, and his last years were devoted to the preparation of a collected edition of his works. The last volume was almost ready for press when he began to fail. He died on December 8, 1859, in his lodgings at 42 Lothian Street, Edinburgh, at the age of seventy-three. His mind had been wandering for some time, and his last words—'Sister, Sister, Sister'—seemed to show that he was back among the scenes of his childhood, and that his thoughts were occupied with his beloved Elizabeth who had died over sixty years before.

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DE QUINCEY

THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN

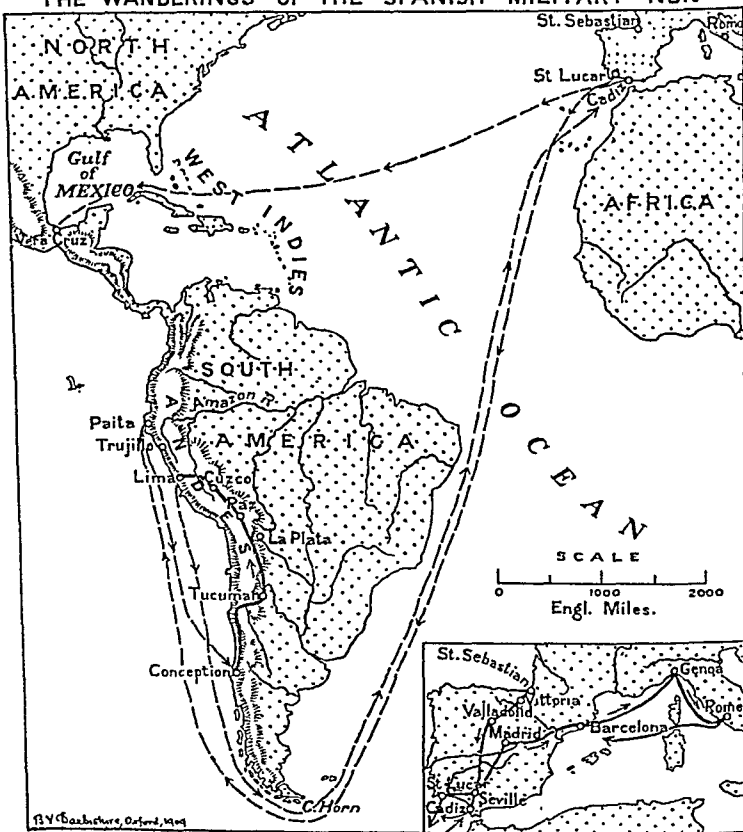
AND

REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

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MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE WANDERINGS OF THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN



THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN

1. AN EXTRA NUISANCE IS INTRODUCED INTO SPAIN

ON a night in the year 1592 (but which night is a secret liable to 365 answers), a Spanish 'son of somebody' (i. e. *hidalgo*), in the fortified town of St. Sebastian, received the disagreeable intelligence from a nurse, that his wife had just presented him with a daughter. No present that the poor misjudging lady could possibly have made him was so entirely useless towards any purpose of his. He had three daughters already; which happened to be more by 2+1, according to *his* 10 reckoning, than any reasonable allowance of daughters. A supernumerary son might have been stowed away; but supernumerary daughters were the very nuisance of Spain. He did, therefore, what in such cases every proud and lazy Spanish gentleman endeavoured to do. And surely I need not interrupt myself by any parenthesis to inform the base British reader, who makes it his glory to work hard, that the peculiar point of honour for the Spanish gentleman lay precisely in these two qualities of pride and laziness: for, if 20 he were not proud, or had anything to do, what could you look for but ruin to the old Spanish aristocracy? some of whom boasted that no member of their house (unless illegitimate, and a mere *terrae filius*) had done a day's work since the Flood. In the Ark, they admitted that Noah kept them tightly to work; because, in fact, there was work to do, that must be done by somebody. But once anchored upon Ararat, they insisted upon it most indignantly that no ancestor of the Spanish *noblesse* had ever worked, except through 30 his slaves. And with a view to new leases of idleness, through new generations of slaves, it was (as

many people think), that Spain went so heartily into the enterprises of Cortes and Pizarro. A sedentary body of Dons, without needing to uncross their thrice noble legs, would thus levy eternal tributes of gold and silver upon eternal mines, through eternal successions of nations that had been, and were to be, enslaved. Meantime, until these golden visions should be realized, aristocratic *daughters*, who constituted the hereditary torment of the true Castilian Don, were
10 to be disposed of in the good old way; viz., by quar-
tering them for life upon nunneries: a plan which entailed no sacrifice whatever upon any of the parties concerned, except, indeed, the little insignificant sacrifice of happiness and natural birthrights to the daughters. But this little inevitable wreck, when placed in the counter-scale to the magnificent purchase of eternal idleness for an aristocracy so ancient, was surely entitled to little attention amongst philosophers. Daughters must perish by generations, and ought to be proud
20 of perishing, in order that their papas, being hidalgos, might luxuriate in laziness. Accordingly, on this system, our hidalgo of St. Sebastian wrapped the new little daughter, odious to his paternal eyes, in a pocket-handkerchief; and then, wrapping up his own throat with a great deal more care, off he bolted to the neighbouring convent of St. Sebastian; meaning by that term not merely a convent of that city, but also (amongst several convents) the one dedicated to that saint. It is well that in this quarrelsome world we
30 quarrel furiously about tastes; since, agreeing too closely about the objects to be liked, we should agree too closely about the objects to be appropriated; which would breed much more fighting than is bred by disagreeing. That little human tadpole, which the old toad of a father would not suffer to stay ten minutes in his house, proved as welcome at the nunnery of St. Sebastian as she was odious at home. The Lady Superior of the convent was aunt, by the mother's side, to the new-born stranger. She therefore kissed
40 and blessed the little lady. The poor nuns, who were never to have any babies of their own, and were

languishing for some amusement, perfectly doted on this prospect of a wee pet. The Superior thanked the hidalgo for his very splendid present. The nuns thanked him each and all; until the old crocodile actually began to whimper sentimentally at what he now perceived to be excess of munificence in himself. Munificence, indeed, he remarked, was his foible, next after parental tenderness.

2. WAIT A LITTLE, HIDALGO!

What a luxury it is, sometimes, to a cynic that 10 there go two words to a bargain. In the convent of St. Sebastian all was gratitude; gratitude (as afore-said) to the hidalgo from all the convent for his present, until at last the hidalgo began to express gratitude to *them* for their gratitude to *him*. Then came a rolling fire of thanks to St. Sebastian; from the Superior, for sending a future saint; from the nuns, for sending such a love of a plaything; and, finally, from Papa, for sending such substantial board and well-bolted lodgings; 'From which,' said the 20 malicious old fellow, 'my Pussy will never find her way out to a thorny and dangerous world.' Won't she? I suspect, 'son of somebody', that the next time you see Pussy, which may happen to be also the last, will not be in a convent of any kind. At present, whilst this general rendering of thanks was going on, one person only took no part in them. That person was Pussy, whose little figure lay quietly stretched out in the arms of a smiling young nun, with eyes nearly shut, yet peering a little at the candles. Pussy 30 said nothing. It's of no great use to say much, when all the world is against you. But if St. Sebastian had enabled her to speak out the whole truth, Pussy *would* have said: 'So, Mr. Hidalgo, you have been engaging lodgings for me; lodgings for life. Wait a little. We'll try that question, when my claws are grown a little longer.'

3. SYMPTOMS OF MUTINY

Disappointment, therefore, was gathering ahead. But for the present there was nothing of the kind. That noble old crocodile, Papa, was not in the least disappointed as regarded *his* expectation of having no anxiety to waste, and no money to pay, on account of his youngest daughter. He insisted on his right to forget her; and in a week *had* forgotten her, never to think of her again but once. The Lady Superior,
10 as regarded *her* demands, was equally content, and through a course of several years; for, as often as she asked Pussy if she would be a saint, Pussy replied that she would, if saints were allowed plenty of sweetmeats. But least of all were the nuns disappointed. Everything that they had fancied possible in a human plaything fell short of what Pussy realized in racketing, racing, and eternal plots against the peace of the elder nuns. No fox ever kept a hen-roost in such alarm as Pussy kept the dormitory of the senior sisters; whilst
20 the younger ladies were run off their legs by the eternal wiles, and had their gravity discomposed, even in chapel, by the eternal antics, of this privileged little kitten.

The kitten had long ago received a baptismal name, which was Kitty, or Kate; and *that* in Spanish is Catalina. It was a good name, as it recalled her original name of Pussy. And, by the way, she had also an ancient and honourable surname, viz., De Erauso, which is to this day a name rooted in Biscay. Her father, the hidalgo, was a military officer in the
30 Spanish service, and had little care whether his kitten should turn out a wolf or a lamb, having made over the fee-simple of his own interest in the little Kate to St. Sebastian, 'to have and to hold,' so long as Kate should keep her hold of this present life. Kate had no apparent intention to let slip that hold; for she was blooming as a rose-bush in June, tall and strong as a young cedar. Yet, notwithstanding this robust health, which forbade one to think of separation from St. Sebastian by death, and notwithstanding the strength
40 of the convent walls, which forbade one to think of any

other separation, the time was drawing near when St. Sebastian's lease in Kate must, in legal phrase, 'determine'; and any *chateaux en Espagne* that the saint might have built on the cloistral fidelity of his pet Catalina, must suddenly give way in one hour, like many other vanities in our own days of Spanish growth; such as Spanish constitutions and charters, Spanish financial reforms, Spanish bonds, and other little varieties of Spanish ostentatious mendacity.

4. THE SYMPTOMS THICKEN

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After reaching her tenth year, Catalina became thoughtful, and not very docile. At times she was even headstrong and turbulent, so that the gentle sisterhood of St. Sebastian, who had no other pet or plaything in the world, began to weep in secret, fearing that they might have been rearing by mistake some future tigress; for as to infancy, *that*, you know, is playful and innocent even in the cubs of a tigress. But *there* the ladies were going too far. Catalina was impetuous and aspiring, violent sometimes, headstrong²⁰ and haughty towards those who presumed upon her youth, absolutely rebellious against all open harshness, but still generous and most forgiving, disdainful of petty arts, and emphatically a noble girl. She was gentle, if people would let her be so. But woe to those that took liberties with *her*! A female servant of the convent, in some authority, one day, in passing up the aisle to matins, *wilfully* gave Kate a push; and, in return, Kate, who never left her debts in arrear, gave the servant for a keepsake such a look, as that³⁰ servant carried with her in fearful remembrance to her grave. It seemed as if Kate had tropic blood in her veins, that continually called her away to the tropics. It was all the fault of that 'blue rejoicing sky', of those purple Biscayan mountains, of that glad tumultuous ocean, which she beheld daily from the nunnery gardens. Or, if only half of it was *their* fault, the other half lay in those golden tales, streaming upwards even into the sanctuaries of convents, like

morning mists touched by earliest sunlight, of kingdoms overshadowing a new world, which had been founded by her kinsmen with the simple aid of a horse and a lance. The reader is to remember that this is no romance, or at least no fiction, that he is reading ; and it is proper to remind the reader of real romances in Ariosto or our own Spenser, that such martial ladies as the Marfisa or Bradamant of the first, and Britomart of the other, were really not the improbabilities that modern
 10 society imagines. Many a stout man, as you will soon see, found that Kate, with a sabre in hand, and well mounted, was no romance at all, but far too serious a fact.

5. GOOD NIGHT, ST. SEBASTIAN !

The day is come—the evening is come—when our poor Kate, that had for fifteen years been so tenderly rocked in the arms of St. Sebastian and his daughters, and that henceforth shall hardly find a breathing space between eternal storms, must see her peaceful cell, must see the holy chapel, for the last time. It was at
 20 vespers, it was during the chanting of the vesper service, that she finally read the secret signal for her departure, which long she had been looking for. It happened that her aunt, the Lady Principal, had forgotten her breviary. As this was in a private 'scrutoire, the prudent lady did not choose to send a servant for it, but gave the key to her niece. The niece, on opening the 'scrutoire, saw, with that rapidity of eye-glance for the one thing needed in great emergencies which ever attended her through life, that *now* was the moment,
 30 *now* had the clock struck, for an opportunity which, if neglected, might never return. There lay the total keys, in one massive *trousseau*, of that monastic fortress, impregnable even to armies from without. St. Sebastian ! do you see what your pet is going to do ? And do it she will, as sure as your name is St. Sebastian. Kate went back to her aunt with the breviary and the key ; but taking good care to leave that awful door, on whose hinge revolved her whole future life, unlocked. Delivering the two

articles to the Superior, she complained of headache—(ah, Kate! what did *you* know of headaches?)—upon which her aunt, kissing her forehead, dismissed her to bed. Now, then, through three-fourths of an hour Kate will have free elbow-room for unanchoring her boat, for unshipping her oars, and for pulling ahead right out of St. Sebastian's cove into the main ocean of life.

Catalina, the reader is to understand, does not belong to the class of persons in whom pre-eminently I profess an interest. But everywhere one loves energy and 10 indomitable courage. And always what is best in its kind one admires, even where the kind may happen to be not specially attractive. Kate's advantages for her rôle in this life lay in four things: viz., in a well-built person, and a particularly strong wrist; 2nd, in a heart that nothing could appal; 3rd, in a sagacious head, never drawn aside from the *hoc age* (from the instant question of the hour) by any weakness of imagination; 4th, in a tolerably thick skin—not literally, for she was fair and blooming, and ominently handsome, 30 having such a skin, in fact, as became a young woman of family in northernmost Spain; but her sensibilities were obtuse as regarded *some* modes of delicacy, *some* modes of equity, *some* modes of the world's opinion, and *all* modes whatever of personal hardship. Lay a stress on that word *some*—for, as to delicacy, she never lost sight of that kind which peculiarly concerns her sex. Long afterwards she told the Pope himself, when confessing without disguise to the paternal old man her sad and infinite wanderings (and I feel convinced of her 30 veracity), that in this respect—viz., all which concerned her sexual honour—even then she was as pure as a child. And, as to equity, it was only that she substituted the rude natural equity of camps for the specious and conventional equity of courts and towns. I must add, though at the cost of interrupting the story by two or three more sentences, that Catalina had also a fifth advantage, which sounds humbly, but is really of use in a world, where even to fold and seal a letter adroitly is not the lowest of accomplishments. 40 She was a *handy* girl. She could turn her hand to

- anything ; of which I will give you two memorable instances. Was there ever a girl in this world but herself that cheated and snapped her fingers at that awful Inquisition, which brooded over the convents of Spain ? that did this without collusion from outside ; trusting to nobody, but to herself, and what beside ? to one needle, two skeins of thread, and a bad pair of scissors ? For, that the scissors were bad, though Kate does not say so in her memoirs, I know by an *a priori* argument ; viz., because *all* scissors were bad in the year 1607. Now, say all decent logicians, from a universal to a particular *valet consequentia*, the right of inference is good. *All* scissors were bad, *ergo*, *some* scissors were bad. The second instance of her handiness will surprise you even more :—She once stood upon a scaffold, under sentence of death (but, understand, on the evidence of false witnesses). Jack Ketch, or, as the present generation calls him, ‘Mr. Calcraft,’ or ‘—— Calcraft, Esq.,’ was absolutely tying the knot under
20 her ear, and the shameful man of ropes fumbled so deplorably, that Kate (who by much nautical experience had learned from another sort of ‘Jack’ how a knot *should* be tied in this world) lost all patience with the contemptible artist, told him she was ashamed of him, took the rope out of his hand, and tied the knot irreproachably herself. The crowd saluted her with a festal roll, long and loud, of *vivas* ; and this word *viva* being a word of good augury—but stop ; let me not anticipate.
- 30 From this sketch of Catalina’s character, the reader is prepared to understand the decision of her present proceeding. She had no time to lose : the twilight, it is true, favoured her ; but in any season twilight is as short-lived as a farthing rushlight ; and she must get under hiding before pursuit commenced. Consequently she lost not one of her forty-five minutes in picking and choosing. No ‘shilly-shally’ in Kate. She saw, with the eyeball of an eagle what was indispensable. Some little money perhaps, in the first place, to pay
40 the first toll-bar of life : so, out of four shillings in Aunt’s purse, or what amounted to that English sum

in various Spanish coins, she took one. You can't say *that* was exorbitant. Which of us wouldn't subscribe a shilling for poor Kate, to put into the first trouser-pockets that ever she will wear? I remember even yet, as a personal experience, that when first arrayed, at four years old, in nankeen trousers, though still so far retaining hermaphrodite relations of dress as to wear a petticoat above my trousers, all my female friends (because they pitied me, as one that had suffered from years of *ague*) filled my pockets with half-crowns, 10 of which I can render no account at this day. But what were my poor pretensions by the side of Kate's? Kate was a fine blooming girl of fifteen, with no touch of *ague*; and, before the next sun rises, Kate shall draw on her first trousers, made by her own hand; and, that she may do so, of all the valuables in aunty's repository she takes nothing beside, first (for I detest your ridiculous and most pedantic neologism of *firstly*) —first, the shilling for which I have already given a receipt; secondly, two skeins of suitable thread; 20 thirdly, one stout needle, and (as I told you before, if you would please to remember things) one bad pair of scissors. Now she was ready; ready to cast off St. Sebastian's towing-rope; ready to cut and run for port anywhere, which port (according to a smart American adage) is to be looked for 'at the back of beyond'. The finishing touch of her preparations was to pick out the proper keys: even there she showed the same discretion. She did no gratuitous mischief. She did not take the wine-cellar key, which would 30 have irritated the good father confessor; she did not take the key of the closet which held the peppermint water and other cordials, for *that* would have distressed the elderly nuns. *She* took those keys only that belonged to *her*, if ever keys did; for they were the keys that locked her out from her natural birthright of liberty. Very different views are taken by different parties of this particular act now meditated by Kate. The Court of Rome treats it as the immediate suggestion of Hell, and open to no forgiveness. Another 40 Court, far loftier, ampler, and of larger authority,

viz., the Court which holds its dreadful tribunal in the human heart and conscience, pronounces this act an inalienable privilege of man, and the mere reassertion of a birthright that can neither be bought nor sold.

6. KATE'S FIRST BIVOUAC AND FIRST MARCH.

Right or wrong, however, in Romish casuistry, Kate was resolved to let herself out; and *did*; and, for fear any man should creep in whilst vespers lasted, and steal the kitchen grate, she locked her old friends in.

10 Then she sought a shelter. The air was moderately warm. She hurried into a chestnut wood, and upon withered leaves, which furnished to Kate her very first bivouac in a long succession of such experiences, she slept till earliest dawn. Spanish diet and youth leave the digestion undisturbed, and the slumbers light. When the lark rose, up rose Catalina. No time to lose; for she was still in the dress of a nun; and therefore, by a law too flagrantly notorious, liable to the peremptory challenge and arrest of any man—

20 the very meanest or poorest—in all Spain. With her *armed* finger (aye, by the way, I forgot the thimble; but Kate did *not*), she set to work upon her amply-embroidered petticoat. She turned it wrong side out; and with the magic that only female hands possess, she had soon sketched and finished a dashing pair of Wellington trousers. All other changes were made according to the materials she possessed, and quite sufficiently to disguise the two main perils—her sex, and her monastic dedication. What was she to do

30 next? Speaking of Wellington trousers anywhere in the north of Spain would remind *us*, but could hardly remind *her*, of Vittoria, where she dimly had heard of some maternal relative. To Vittoria, therefore, she bent her course; and, like the Duke of Wellington, but arriving more than two centuries earlier, she gained a great victory at that place. She had made a two days' march, with no provisions but wild berries; she depended, for anything better, as light-heartedly as the Duke, upon attacking, sword in hand, storming her

dear friend's entrenchments, and effecting a lodgement in his breakfast-room. should he happen to possess one. This amiable relative proved to be an elderly man, who had but one foible, or perhaps it was a virtue, which had by continual development overshadowed his whole nature—it was pedantry. On that hint Catalina spoke: she knew by heart, from the services of the convent, a good number of Latin phrases. Latin!—Oh, but *that* was charming; and in one so young! The grave Don owned the soft im- 10
 peachment; relented at once, and clasped the hopeful young gentleman in the Wellington trousers to his *uncular* and rather angular breast. In this house the yarn of life was of a mingled quality. The table was good, but that was exactly what Kate cared least about. On the other hand, the amusement was of the worst kind. In consisted chiefly in conjugating Latin verbs, especially such as were obstinately irregular. To show him a withered frost-bitten verb, that wanted its preterite, wanted its gerunds, wanted 20
 its supines, wanted, in fact, everything in this world, fruits or blossoms, that make a verb desirable, was to *earn the Don's gratitude for life*. All day long he was, as you may say, marching and countermarching his favourite brigades of verbs—verbs frequentative, verbs inceptive, verbs desiderative—horse, foot, and artillery; changing front, advancing from the rear, throwing out skirmishing parties, until Kate, not given to faint, must have thought of such a resource, as once in her life she had thought so seasonably of a vesper 30
 headache. This was really worse than St. Sebastian's. It reminds one of a French gaiety in Thiébault, who describes a rustic party, under equal despair, as employing themselves in conjugating the verb *s'ennuyer*,—*Je m'ennuie, tu t'ennuies, il s'ennuie; nous nous ennuyons, &c.*; thence to the imperfect—*Je m'ennuyois, tu t'ennuyois, &c.*; thence to the imperative—*Qu'il s'ennuie, &c.*; and so on, through the whole dolorous conjugation. Now, you know, when the time comes that *nous nous ennuyons*, the best course is, to part. Kate 40
 saw *that*; and she walked off from the Don's (of whose

amorous passion for defective verbs one would have wished to know the catastrophe), taking from his mantelpiece rather more silver than she had levied on her aunt. But then, observe, the Don also was a relative ; and really he owed her a small cheque on his banker for turning out on his field-days. A man, if he is a kinsman, has no unlimited privilege of boring one : an uncle has a qualified right to bore his nephews, even when they happen to be nieces ; but he has no right to
 10 bore either nephew or niece gratis.

7. KATE AT COURT, WHERE SHE PRESCRIBES PHLEBOTOMY, AND IS PROMOTED

From Vittoria, Kate was guided by a carrier to Valladolid. Luckily, as it seemed at first, but, in fact, it made little difference in the end, here, at Valladolid, were assembled the King and his Court. Consequently, there was plenty of regiments and plenty of regimental bands. Attracted by one of these, Catalina was quietly listening to the music, when some street ruffians, in
 20 derision of the gay colours and the particular form of her forest-made costume (rascals ! what sort of trousers would *they* have made with no better scissors ?), began to pelt her with stones. Ah, my friends of the genus *blackguard*, you little know who it is that you are selecting for experiments. This is the one creature of fifteen years old in all Spain, be the other male or female, whom nature, and temper, and provocation have qualified for taking the conceit out of you. This she very soon did, laying open with sharp stones more
 30 heads than either one or two, and letting out rather too little than too much of bad Valladolid blood. But mark the constant villany of this world. Certain *alguazils*—very like some other *alguazils* that I know of nearer home—having stood by quietly to see the friendless stranger insulted and assaulted, now felt it their duty to apprehend the poor nun for her most natural retaliation : and had there been such a thing as a treadmill in Valladolid, Kate was booked for a place on it without further inquiry. Luckily, injustice does

not *always* prosper. A gallant young cavalier, who had witnessed from his windows the whole affair, had seen the provocation, and admired Catalina's behaviour—equally patient at first, and bold at last—hastened into the street, pursued the officers, forced them to release their prisoner, upon stating the circumstances of the case, and instantly offered to Catalina a situation amongst his retinue. He was a man of birth and fortune; and the place offered, that of an honorary page, not being at all degrading even to 10 a 'daughter of somebody', was cheerfully accepted.

8. TOO GOOD TO LAST!

Here Catalina spent a happy quarter of a year! She was now splendidly dressed in dark blue velvet, by a tailor that did not work within the gloom of a chestnut forest. She and the young cavalier, Don Francisco de Cardenas, were mutually pleased, and had mutual confidence. All went well—until one evening (but, luckily, not before the sun had been set so long as to make all things indistinct), who should 20 march into the antechamber of the cavalier but that sublime of crocodiles, *Papa*, whom we lost sight of fifteen years ago, and shall never see again after this night. He had his crocodile tears all ready for use, in working order, like a good industrious fire-engine. Whom will he speak to first in this lordly mansion? It was absolutely to Catalina herself that he advanced; whom, for many reasons, he could not be supposed to recognize—lapse of years, male attire, twilight, were all against him. Still, she might have the family 30 countenance; and Kate fancied (but it must have been a fancy) that he looked with a suspicious scrutiny into her face, as he inquired for the young Don. To avert her own face, to announce him to Don Francisco, to wish *Papa* on the shores of that ancient river, the Nile, furnished but one moment's work to the active Catalina. She lingered, however, as her place entitled her to do, at the door of the audience chamber. She guessed already, but in a moment she *heard* from

Papa's lips, what was the nature of his errand. His daughter Catherine, he informed the Don, had eloped from the convent of St. Sebastian, a place rich in delight, radiant with festal pleasure, overflowing with luxury. Then he laid open the unparalleled ingratitude of such a step. Oh, the unseen treasure that had been spent upon that girl! Oh, the untold sums of money, the unknown amounts of cash, that had been sunk in that unhappy speculation! The nights of sleeplessness suffered during her infancy! The fifteen years of solicitude thrown away in schemes for her improvement! It would have moved the heart of a stone. The hidalgo wept copiously at his own pathos. And to such a height of grandeur had he carried his Spanish sense of the sublime, that he disdained to mention—yes! positively not even in a parenthesis would he condescend to notice—that pocket-handkerchief which he had left at St. Sebastian's fifteen years ago, by way of envelope for Pussy, and which, to the best of Pussy's knowledge, was the one sole memorandum of Papa ever heard of at St. Sebastian's. Pussy, however, saw no use in revising and correcting the text of Papa's remembrances. She showed her usual prudence, and her usual incomparable decision. It did not appear, as yet, that she would be reclaimed (or was at all suspected for the fugitive) by her father, or by Don Cardenas. For it is an instance of that singular fatality which pursued Catalina through life, that, to her own astonishment (as she now collected from her father's conference), nobody had traced her to Valladolid, nor had her father's visit any connexion with any suspicious traveller in that direction. The case was quite different. Strangely enough, her street row had thrown her, by the purest of accidents, into the one sole household in all Spain that had an official connexion with St. Sebastian's. That convent had been founded by the young cavalier's family; and, according to the usage of Spain, the young man (as present representative of his house) was the responsible protector and official visitor of the establishment. It was not

to the Don, as harbourer of his daughter, but to the Don, as hereditary patron of the convent, that the hidalgo was appealing. This being so, Kate might have stayed safely some time longer. Yet, again, that would but have multiplied the clues for tracing her; and, finally, she would too probably have been discovered; after which, with all his youthful generosity, the poor Don could not have protected her. Too terrific was the vengeance that awaited an abettor of any fugitive nun; but, above all, if such a crime were perpetrated 10 by an official mandatory of the church. Yet, again, so far it was the more hazardous course to abscond, that it almost revealed her to the young Don as the missing daughter. Still, if it really *had* that effect, nothing at present obliged him to pursue her, as might have been the case a few weeks later. Kate argued (I dare say) rightly, as she always did. Her prudence whispered eternally, that safety there was none for her, until she had laid the Atlantic between herself and St. Sebastian's. Life was to be for *her* 20 a Bay of Biscay; and it was odds but she had first embarked upon this billowy life from the literal Bay of Biscay. Chance ordered otherwise. Or, as a Frenchman says, with eloquent ingenuity, in connexion with this very story, 'Chance is but the pseudonym of God for those particular cases which he does not choose to subscribe openly with his own sign manual.' She crept upstairs to her bedroom. Simple are the travelling preparations of those that, possessing nothing, have no imperials to pack. She had Juvenal's 30 qualification for carolling gaily through a forest full of robbers; for she had nothing to lose but a change of linen, that rode easily enough under her left arm, leaving the right free for answering the questions of impertinent customers. As she crept downstairs, she heard the crocodile still weeping forth his sorrows to the pensive ear of twilight, and to the sympathetic Don Francisco. Ah, what a beautiful idea occurs to me at this point! Once on the hustings at Liverpool I saw a mob orator, whose brawling mouth, open 40 to its widest expansion, suddenly some larking sailor,

by the most dexterous of shots, plugged up with a paving-stone. Here, now, at Valladolid, was another mouth that equally required plugging. What a pity, then, that some gay brother page of Kate's had not been there to turn aside into the room, armed with a roasted potato, and, taking a sportsman's aim, to have lodged it in the crocodile's abominable mouth! Yet, what an anachronism! There *were* no roasted potatoes in Spain at that date (1608), which can be
10 apodeictically proved, because in Spain there were no potatoes at all; and very few in England. But anger drives a man to say anything.

9. HOW TO CHOOSE LODGINGS

Catalina had seen her last of friends and enemies in Valladolid. Short was her time there; but she had improved it so far as to make a few of both. There was an eye or two in Valladolid that would have glared with malice upon her, had she been seen by *all* eyes in that city, as she tripped through the streets in the
20 dusk; and eyes there were that would have softened into tears, had they seen the desolate condition of the child, or in vision had seen the struggles that were before her. But what's the use of wasting tears upon our Kate? Wait till to-morrow morning at sunrise, and see if she is particularly in need of pity. What, now, should a young lady do—I propose it as a subject for a prize essay—that finds herself in Valladolid at nightfall, having no letters of introduction, and not
30 aware of any reason, great or small, for preferring this or that street in general, except so far as she knows of some reason for avoiding one street in particular? The great problem I have stated, Kate investigated as she went along; and she solved it with the accuracy which she ever applied to *practical* exigencies. Her conclusion was—that the best door to knock at, in such a case, was the door where there was no need to knock at all, as being deliberately left open to all comers. For she argued, that within such a door there would be nothing to steal, so that, at least, you

could not be mistaken in the dark for a thief. Then, as to stealing from *her*, they might do that if they could.

Upon these principles, which hostile critics will in vain endeavour to undermine, she laid her hand upon what seemed a rude stable-door. Such it proved; and the stable was not absolutely empty: for there was a cart inside—a four-wheeled cart. True, there was so; but you couldn't take *that* away in your pocket; and there were also five loads of straw, but then of those 10 a lady could take no more than her reticule would carry, which perhaps was allowed by the courtesy of Spain. So Kate was right as to the difficulty of being challenged for a thief. Closing the door as gently as she had opened it, she dropped her person, handsomely dressed as she was, upon the nearest heap of straw. Some ten feet further were lying two muleteers, honest and happy enough, as compared with the Lords of the Bedchamber then in Valladolid: but still gross men, carnally deaf from eating garlic and onions, and other 20 horrible substances. Accordingly, they never heard her; nor were aware, until dawn, that such a blooming person existed. But she was aware of *them*, and of their conversation. In the intervals of their sleep, they talked much of an expedition to America, on the point of sailing under Don Ferdinand de Cordova. It was to sail from some Andalusian port. That was the thing for *her*. At daylight she woke, and jumped up, needing little more toilet than the birds that already were singing in the gardens, or than the two muleteers, 30 who, good, honest fellows, saluted the handsome boy kindly—thinking no ill at his making free with *their* straw, though no leave had been asked.

With these philogarlic men Kate took her departure. The morning was divine: and, leaving Valladolid with the transports that befitted such a golden dawn, feeling also already, in the very obscurity of her exit, the pledge of her final escape; she cared no longer for the crocodile, nor for St. Sebastian, nor (in the way of fear) for the protector of St. Sebastian, though of *him* she 40 thought with some tenderness; so deep is the remem-

brance of kindness mixed with justice. Andalusia she reached rather slowly ; many weeks the journey cost her ; but, after all, what are weeks ? She reached Seville many months before she was sixteen years old, and quite in time for the expedition.

10. AN UGLY DILEMMA, WHERE RIGHT AND WRONG
IS REDUCED TO A QUESTION OF RIGHT OR LEFT

Ugly indeed is that dilemma where shipwreck and the sea are on one side of you, and famine on the other ;
10 or, if a chance of escape is offered, apparently it depends upon taking the right road where there is no guide-post.

St. Lucar being the port of rendezvous for the Peruvian expedition, thither she went. All comers were welcome on board the fleet ; much more a fine young fellow like Kate. She was at once engaged as a mate ; and *her* ship, in particular, after doubling Cape Horn without loss, made the coast of Peru. Païta was the port of her destination. Very near to this port they were, when a storm threw them upon a coral reef.
20 There was little hope of the ship from the first, for she was unmanageable, and was not expected to hold together for twenty-four hours. In this condition, with death before their faces, mark what Kate did ; and please to remember it for her benefit, when she does any other little thing that angers you. The crew lowered the long-boat. Vainly the Captain protested against this disloyal desertion of a King's ship, which might yet, perhaps, be run on shore, so as to save the stores. All the crew, to a man, deserted the Captain.
30 You may say *that* literally ; for the single exception was *not* a man, being our bold-hearted Kate. She was the only sailor that refused to leave her Captain, or the King of Spain's ship. The rest pulled away for the shore, and with fair hopes of reaching it. But one half-hour told another tale : just about that time came a broad sheet of lightning, which, through the darkness of evening, revealed the boat in the very act of mounting like a horse upon an inner reef, instantly filling, and throwing out the crew, every man of whom dis-

appeared amongst the breakers. The night which succeeded was gloomy for both the representatives of his Catholic Majesty. It cannot be denied by the underwriters at Lloyd's, that the muleteer's stable at Valladolid was worth twenty such ships, though the stable was *not* insured against fire, and the ship *was* insured against the sea and the wind by some fellow that thought very little of his engagements. But what's the use of sitting down to cry? That was never any trick of Catalina's. By daybreak, she was at work 10 with an axe in her hand. I knew it, before ever I came to this place in her memoirs. I felt, as sure as if I had read it, that when day broke, we should find Kate at work. Thimble or axe, trousers or raft, all one to *her*.

The Captain, though true to his duty, faithful to his King, and on his King's account even hopeful, seems from the first to have desponded on his own. He gave no help towards the raft. Signs were speaking, however, pretty loudly that he must do something; for notice to quit was now served pretty liberally. Kate's 20 raft was ready; and she encouraged the Captain to think that it would give both of them something to hold by in swimming, if not even carry double. At this moment, when all was waiting for a start, and the ship herself was waiting only for a final lurch to say good-bye to the King of Spain, Kate went and did a thing which some erring people will misconstrue. She knew of a box laden with gold coins, reputed to be the King of Spain's, and meant for contingencies on the voyage out. This she smashed open with her axe, 30 and took out a sum in ducats and pistoles equal to one hundred guineas English; which, having well secured in a pillow-case, she then lashed firmly to the raft. Now this, you know, though not 'flotsam', because it would not float, was certainly, by maritime law, 'jetsam.' It would be the idlest of scruples to fancy that the sea or a shark had a better right to it than a philosopher, or a splendid girl who showed herself capable of writing a very fair 8vo, to say nothing of her decapitating in battle, as you will find, more than one 40 of the King's enemies, and recovering the King's banner.

No sane moralist would hesitate to do the same thing under the same circumstances, even on board an English vessel, and though the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Secretary, that pokes his nose into everything nautical, should be looking on. The raft was now thrown into the sea. Kate jumped after it, and then entreated the Captain to follow her. He attempted it; but, wanting her youthful agility, he struck his head against a spar, and sank like lead, giving notice below that his ship was coming after him as fast as she could make ready. Kate's luck was better: she mounted the raft, and by the rising tide was gradually washed ashore, but so exhausted, as to have lost all recollection. She lay for hours, until the warmth of the sun revived her. On sitting up, she saw a desolate shore stretching both ways—nothing to eat, nothing to drink, but fortunately the raft and the money had been thrown near her; none of the lashings having given way—only what is the use of a golden ducat, though worth nine shillings in silver, or even of a hundred, amongst tangle and sea-gulls? The money she distributed amongst her pockets, and soon found strength to rise and march forward. But which *was* forward? and which backward? She knew by the conversation of the sailors that Païta must be in the neighbourhood; and Païta, being a port, could not be in the inside of Peru, but, of course, somewhere on its outside—and the outside of a maritime land must be the shore; so that, if she kept the shore, and went far enough, she could not fail of hitting her foot against Païta at last, in the very darkest of nights, provided only she could first find out which was *up* and which was *down*; else she might walk her shoes off, and find herself, after all, a thousand miles in the wrong. Here was an awkward case, and all for want of a guide-post. Still, when one thinks of Kate's prosperous horoscope; that, after so long a voyage, *she* only, out of the total crew, was thrown on the American shore, with one hundred and five pounds in her purse of clear gain on the voyage, a conviction arises that she *could* not guess wrongly. She might have tossed up, having

coins in her pocket, 'Heads or tails !' but this kind of sortilege was then coming to be thought irreligious in Christendom, as a Jewish and a heathen mode of questioning the dark future. She simply guessed, therefore ; and very soon a thing happened which, though adding nothing to strengthen her guess as a true one, did much to sweeten it, if it should prove a false one. On turning a point of the shore, she came upon a barrel of biscuit washed ashore from the ship. Biscuit is one of the best things I know, even if not 10 made by Mrs. Bobo ; but it is the soonest spoiled ; and one would like to hear counsel on one puzzling point, why it is that a touch of water utterly ruins it, taking its life, and leaving behind a *caput mortuum*. Upon this *caput*, in default of anything better, Kate breakfasted. And, breakfast being over, she rang the bell for the waiter to take away, and to—— Stop ! what nonsense ! There could be no bell ; besides which, there could be no waiter. Well, then, without asking the waiter's aid, she that was always prudent packed 20 up some of the Catholic King's biscuit, as she had previously packed up far too little of his gold. But in such cases a most delicate question occurs, pressing equally on dietetics and algebra. It is this: if you pack up too much, then, by this extra burden of salt provisions, you may retard for days your arrival at fresh provisions ; on the other hand, if you pack up too little, you may famish, and never arrive at all. Catalina hit the *juste milieu* ; and, about twilight on the third day, she found herself entering Paita, without 30 having had to swim any *very* broad river in her walk.

11. FROM THE MALICE OF THE SEA, TO THE MALICE OF MAN AND WOMAN

The first thing, in such a case of distress, which a young lady does, even if she happens to be a young gentleman, is to beautify her dress. Kate always attended to *that*. The man she sent for was not properly a tailor, but one who employed tailors, he himself furnishing the materials. His name was

Urquiza, a fact of very little importance to us in 1854, if it had stood only at the head and foot of Kate's little account. But, unhappily for Kate's début on this vast American stage, the case was otherwise. Mr. Urquiza had the misfortune (equally common in the Old World and the New) of being a knave; and also a showy, specious knave. Kate, who had prospered under sea allowances of biscuit and hardship, was now expanding in proportions. With very little
10 vanity or consciousness on that head, she now displayed a really magnificent person; and, when dressed anew in the way that became a young officer in the Spanish service, she looked the representative picture of a Spanish *cabalgador*. It is strange that such an appearance, and such a rank, should have suggested to Urquiza the presumptuous idea of wishing that Kate might become his clerk. He *did*, however, wish it; for Kate wrote a beautiful hand; and a stranger thing is, that Kate accepted his proposal. This might arise
20 from the difficulty of moving in those days to any distance in Peru. The ship which threw Kate ashore had been merely bringing stores to the station of Paita; and no corps of the royal armies was readily to be reached, whilst something must be done at once for a livelihood. Urquiza had two mercantile establishments—one at Trujillo, to which he repaired in person, on Kate's agreeing to undertake the management of the other in Paita. Like the sensible girl that we have always found her, she demanded specific
30 instructions for her guidance in duties so new. Certainly she was in a fair way for seeing life. Telling her beads at St. Sebastian's, manœuvring irregular verbs at Vittoria, acting as gentleman-usher at Valladolid, serving his Spanish Majesty round Cape Horn, fighting with storms and sharks off the coast of Peru, and now commencing as book-keeper or *commis* to a draper at Paita—does she not justify the character that I myself gave her, just before dismissing her from St. Sebastian's, of being a 'handy' girl? Mr. Urquiza's
40 instructions were short, easy to be understood, but rather comic; and (yet which is odd) they led to tragic

results. There were two debtors of the shop (*many*, it is to be hoped, but two meriting his affectionate notice), with respect to whom he left the most opposite directions. The one was a very handsome lady; and the rule as to *her* was, that she was to have credit unlimited; strictly unlimited. That seemed plain. The other customer, favoured by Mr. Urquiza's valedictory thoughts, was a young man, cousin to the handsome lady, and bearing the name of Reyes. This youth occupied in Mr. Urquiza's estimate the same hyper-10 bolical rank as the handsome lady, but on the opposite side of the equation. The rule as to *him* was, that he was to have *no* credit; strictly none. In this case, also, Kate saw no difficulty; and when she came to know Mr. Reyes a little, she found the path of pleasure coinciding with the path of duty. Mr. Urquiza could not be more precise in laying down the rule, than Kate was in enforcing it. But in the other case a scruple arose. *Unlimited* might be a word, not of Spanish law, but of Spanish rhetoric; such as, 'Live 20 a thousand years,' which even annuity offices utter without a pang. Kate therefore wrote to Trujillo, expressing her honest fears, and desiring to have more definite instructions. These were positive. If the lady chose to send for the entire shop, her account was to be debited instantly with *that*. She had, however, as yet, not sent for the shop, but she began to manifest strong signs of sending for the shopman. Upon the blooming young Biscayan had her roving eye settled; and she was in the course of making up 30 her mind to take Kate for a sweetheart. Poor Kate saw this with a heavy heart. And, at the same time that she had a prospect of a tender friend more than she wanted, she had become certain of an extra enemy that she wanted quite as little. What she had done to offend Mr. Reyes, Kate could not guess, except as to the matter of the credit; but then, in that she only followed her instructions. Still, Mr. Reyes was of opinion that there were two ways of executing orders: but the main offence was unintentional on Kate's part. 40 Reyes (though as yet she did not know it) had himself

been a candidate for the situation of clerk; and intended probably to keep the equation precisely as it was with respect to the allowance of credit, only to change places with the handsome lady—keeping *her* on the negative side, himself on the affirmative; an arrangement, you know, that in the final result could have made no sort of pecuniary difference to Urquiza.

Thus stood matters, when a party of vagrant comedians strolled into Paita. Kate, being a native
 10 Spaniard, ranked as one of the Paita aristocracy, and was expected to attend. She did so; and there also was the malignant Reyes. He came and seated himself purposely so as to shut out Kate from all view of the stage. She, who had nothing of the bully in her nature, and was a gentle creature, when her wild Biscayan blood had not been kindled by insult, courteously requested him to move a little; upon which Reyes replied, that it was not in his power to oblige the clerk as to that, but that he *could* oblige
 20 him by cutting his throat. The tiger that slept in Catalina wakened at once. She seized him, and would have executed vengeance on the spot, but that a party of young men interposed, for the present, to part them. The next day, when Kate (always ready to forget and forgive) was thinking no more of the row, Reyes passed; by spitting at the window, and other gestures insulting to Kate, again he roused her Spanish blood. Out she rushed, sword in hand; a duel began in the street; and very soon Kate's sword had passed into
 30 the heart of Reyes. Now that the mischief was done, the police were, as usual, all alive for the pleasure of avenging it. Kate found herself suddenly in a strong prison, and with small hopes of leaving it, except for execution.

12. FROM THE STEPS LEADING UP TO THE SCAFFOLD, TO THE STEPS LEADING DOWN TO ASSASSINATION

The relatives of the dead man were potent in Paita, and clamorous for justice; so that the Corregidor, in a case where he saw a very poor chance of being cor-
 40 rupted by bribes, felt it his duty to be sublimely incor-

ruptible. The reader knows, however, that amongst the connexions of the deceased bully was that handsome lady, who differed as much from her cousin in her sentiments as to Kate, as she did in the extent of her credit with Mr. Urquiza. To *her* Kate wrote a note; and, using one of the Spanish King's gold coins for bribing the jailer, got it safely delivered. That, perhaps, was unnecessary; for the lady had been already on the alert, and had summoned Urquiza from Trujillo. By some means, not very luminously 10 stated, and by paying proper fees in proper quarters, Kate was smuggled out of the prison at nightfall, and smuggled into a pretty house in the suburbs. Had she known exactly the footing she stood on as to the law, she would have been decided. As it was, she was uneasy, and jealous of mischief abroad; and, before supper, she understood it all. Urquiza briefly informed his clerk that it would be requisite for him (the clerk) to marry the handsome lady. But why? Because, said Urquiza, after talking for hours with the 20 Corregidor, who was infamous for obstinacy, he had found it impossible to make him 'hear reason', and release the prisoner, until this compromise of marriage was suggested. But how could public justice be pacified for the clerk's unfortunate homicide of Reyes, by a female cousin of the deceased man engaging to love, honour, and obey the clerk for life? Kate could not see her way through this logic. 'Nonsense, my friend,' said Urquiza, 'you don't comprehend. As it stands, the affair is a murder, and hanging the penalty. 30 But, if you marry into the murdered man's house, then it becomes a little family murder—all quiet and comfortable amongst ourselves. What has the Corregidor to do with that? or the public either? Now, let me introduce the bride.' Supper entered at that moment, and the bride immediately after. The thoughtfulness of Kate was narrowly observed, and even alluded to, but politely ascribed to the natural anxieties of a prisoner, and the very imperfect state of his liberation even yet from prison surveillance. Kate had, indeed, 40 never been in so trying a situation before. The

anxieties of the farewell night at St. Sebastian were nothing to this ; because, even if she had failed *then*, a failure might not have been always irreparable. It was but to watch and wait. But now, at this supper table, she was not more alive to the nature of the peril than she was to the fact, that if, before the night closed, she did not by some means escape from it, she never *would* escape with life. The deception as to her sex, though resting on no motive that pointed to these
10 people, or at all concerned them, would be resented as if it had. The lady would regard the case as a mockery ; and Urquiza would lose his opportunity of delivering himself from an imperious mistress. According to the usages of the times and country, Kate knew that within twelve hours she would be assassinated.

People of infirmer resolution would have lingered at the supper table, for the sake of putting off the evil moment of final crisis. Not so Kate. She had revolved the case on all its sides in a few minutes, and had
20 formed her resolution. This done, she was as ready for the trial at one moment as another ; and, when the lady suggested that the hardships of a prison must have made repose desirable, Kate assented, and instantly rose. A sort of procession formed, for the purpose of doing honour to the interesting guest, and escorting him in pomp to his bedroom. Kate viewed it much in the same light as that procession to which for some days she had been expecting an invitation from the Corregidor. Far ahead ran the servant-woman,
30 as a sort of outrider ; then came Urquiza, like a pasha of two tails, who granted two sorts of credit—viz., unlimited and none at all—bearing two wax-lights, one in each hand, and wanting only cymbals and kettle-drums to express emphatically the pathos of his Castilian strut ; next came the bride, a little in advance of the clerk, but still turning obliquely towards him, and smiling graciously into his face ; lastly, bringing up the rear, came the prisoner—our poor ensnared Kate—the nun, the page, the mate, the clerk, the
40 homicide, the convict ; and for this night only, by particular desire, the bridegroom-elect.

It was Kate's fixed opinion, that, if for a moment she entered any bedroom having obviously no outlet, her fate would be that of an ox once driven within the shambles. Outside, the bullock might make some defence with his horns; but once in, with no space for turning, he is muffled and gagged. She carried her eye, therefore, like a hawk's, steady, though restless, for vigilant examination of every angle she turned. Before she entered any bedroom, she was resolved to reconnoitre it from the doorway, and, in ¹⁰ case of necessity, show fight at once before entering, as the best chance in a crisis where all chances were bad. Everything ends; and at last the procession reached the bedroom door, the outrider having filed off to the rear. One glance sufficed to satisfy Kate that windows there were none, and, therefore, no outlet for escape. Treachery appeared even in *that*; and Kate, though unfortunately without arms, was now fixed for resistance. Mr. Urquiza entered first, with a strut more than usually grandiose, and inexpressibly sub-²⁰ lime—'Sound the trumpets! Beat the drums!' There were, as we know already, no windows; but a slight interruption to Mr. Urquiza's pompous tread showed that there were steps downwards into the room. Those, thought Kate, will suit me even better. She had watched the unlocking of the bedroom door—she had lost nothing—she had marked that the key was left in the lock. At this moment, the beautiful lady, as one acquainted with the details of the house, turning with the air of a gracious mistress, held out ³⁰ her fair hand to guide Kate in careful descent of the steps. This had the air of taking out Kate to dance; and Kate, at that same moment, answering to it by the gesture of a modern waltzer, threw her arm behind the lady's waist; hurled her headlong down the steps right against Mr. Urquiza, draper and haberdasher; and then, with the speed of lightning, throwing the door *home* within its architrave, doubly locked the creditor and unlimited debtor into the rat-trap which they had prepared for herself.

40

The affrighted outrider fled with horror; she knew

that the clerk had already committed one homicide; a second would cost him still less thought; and thus it happened that egress was left easy.

13. FROM HUMAN MALICE, BACK AGAIN TO THE MALICE OF WINDS AND WAVES

But, when abroad, and free once more in the bright starry night, which way should Kate turn? The whole city would prove but one vast rat-trap for her, as bad as Mr. Urquiza's, if she was not off before morning. At a glance she comprehended that the sea was her only chance. To the port she fled. All was silent. Watchmen there were none; and she jumped into a boat. To use the oars was dangerous, for she had no means of muffling them. But she contrived to hoist a sail, pushed off with a boat-hook, and was soon stretching across the water for the mouth of the harbour, before a breeze light but favourable. Having cleared the difficulties of exit, she lay down, and unintentionally fell asleep. When she awoke, the sun had been up three or four hours; all was right otherwise; but had she not served as a sailor, Kate would have trembled upon finding that, during her long sleep of perhaps seven or eight hours, she had lost sight of land; by what distance she could only guess; and in what direction, was to some degree doubtful. All this, however, seemed a great advantage to the bold girl, throwing her thoughts back on the enemies she had left behind. The disadvantage was—having no breakfast, not even damaged biscuit; and some anxiety naturally arose as to ulterior prospects a little beyond the horizon of breakfast. But who's afraid? As sailors whistle for a wind, Catalina really had but to whistle for anything with energy, and it was sure to come. Like Caesar to the pilot of Dyrrhachium, she might have said, for the comfort of her poor timorous boat (though a boat that in fact was destined soon to perish), '*Catalinam vchis, et fortunas eius.*' Meantime, being very doubtful as to the best course for sailing, and content if her course did but lie off shore, she 'carried on', as sailors say, under

easy sail, going, in fact, just whither and just how the Pacific breezes suggested in the gentlest of whispers. 'All right behind,' was Kate's opinion; and, what was better, very soon she might say, 'All right ahead'; for, some hour or two before sunset, when dinner was for once becoming, even to Kate, the most interesting of subjects for meditation, suddenly a large ship began to swell upon the brilliant atmosphere. In those latitudes, and in those years, any ship was pretty sure to be Spanish: sixty years later, the odds 10 were in favour of its being an English buccaneer; which would have given a new direction to Kate's energy. Kate continued to make signals with a handkerchief whiter than the crocodile's of Ann. Dom. 1592, else it would hardly have been noticed. Perhaps, after all, it would not, but that the ship's course carried her very nearly across Kate's. The stranger lay to for her. It was dark by the time Kate steered herself under the ship's quarter; and *then* was seen an instance of this girl's eternal wakefulness. Some- 20 thing was painted on the stern of her boat, she could not see *what*; but she judged that, whatever this might be, it would express some connexion with the port that she had just quitted. Now, it was her wish to break the chain of traces connecting her with such a scamp as Urquiza; since else, through his commercial correspondence, he might disperse over Peru a portrait of herself by no means flattering. How should she accomplish this? It was dark; and she stood, as you may see an Etonian do at times, 30 rocking her little boat from side to side, until it had taken in water as much as might be agreeable. Too much it proved for the boat's constitution, and the boat perished of dropsy—Kate declining to tap it. She got a ducking herself; but what cared she? Up the ship's side she went, as gaily as ever, in those years when she was called Pussy, she had raced after the nuns of St. Sebastian; jumped upon deck, and told the first lieutenant, when he questioned her about her adventures, quite as much truth as any man, 40 under the rank of admiral, had a right to expect.

14. BRIGHT GLEAMS OF SUNSHINE

This ship was full of recruits for the Spanish army, and bound to Conception. Even in that destiny was an iteration, or repeating memorial of the significance that ran through Catalina's most casual adventures. She had enlisted amongst the soldiers; and, on reaching port, the very first person who came off from shore was a dashing young military officer, whom at once by his name and rank (though she had never consciously seen him) she identified as her own brother. He was splendidly situated in the service, being the Governor-General's secretary, besides his rank as a cavalry officer; and, his errand on board being to inspect the recruits, naturally, on reading in the roll one of them described as a Biscayan, the ardent young man came up with high-bred courtesy to Catalina, took the young recruit's hand with kindness, feeling that to be a compatriot at so great a distance was to be a sort of relative, and asked with emotion after old boyish remembrances. There was a scriptural pathos in what followed, as if it were some scene of domestic re-union, opening itself from patriarchal ages. The young officer was the eldest son of the house, and had left Spain when Catalina was only three years old. But, singularly enough, Catalina it was, the little wild cat that he yet remembered seeing at St. Sebastian's, upon whom his earliest inquiries settled. 'Did the recruit know his family, the De Erausos?' Oh yes, everybody knew *them*. 'Did the recruit know little Catalina?' Catalina smiled, as she replied that she did; and gave such an animated description of the little fiery wretch, as made the officer's eye flash with gratified tenderness, and with certainty that the recruit was no counterfeit Biscayan. Indeed, you know, if Kate couldn't give a good description of Pussy, who could? The issue of the interview was, that the officer insisted on Kate's making a home of his quarters. He did other services for his unknown sister. He placed her as a trooper in his own regiment, and favoured her in many a

way that is open to one having authority. But the person, after all, that did most to serve our Kate, was Kate. War was then raging with Indians, both from Chili and Peru. Kate had always done her duty in action; but at length in the decisive battle of Puren, there was an opening for doing something more. Havoc had been made of her own squadron: most of the officers were killed, and the standard was carried off. Kate gathered around her a small party—galloped after the Indian column that was ¹⁰ carrying away the trophy—charged—saw all her own party killed—but, in spite of wounds on her face and shoulder, succeeded in bearing away the recovered standard. She rode up to the General and his Staff; she dismounted; she rendered up her prize; and fainted away, much less from the blinding blood, than from the tears of joy which dimmed her eyes, as the General, waving his sword in admiration over her head, pronounced our Kate on the spot an *Alférez* or Standard-Bearer, with a commission from the King ²⁰ of Spain and the Indies. Bonny Kate! Noble Kate! I would there were not two centuries laid between us, so that I might have the pleasure of kissing thy fair hand.

15. THE SUNSHINE IS OVERCAST

Kate had the good sense to see the danger of revealing her sex, or her relationship, even to her own brother. The grasp of the Church never relaxed, never 'prescribed', unless freely and by choice. The nun, if discovered, would have been taken out of the ³⁰ horse-barracks or the dragoon-saddle. She had the firmness, therefore, for many years, to resist the sisterly impulses that sometimes suggested such a confidence. For years, and those years the most important of her life—the years that developed her character—she lived undetected as a brilliant cavalry officer under her brother's patronage. And the bitterest grief in poor Kate's whole life, was the tragical (and, were it not fully attested, one might say the ultrascenical) event

that dissolved their long connexion. Let me spend a word of apology on poor Kate's errors. We all commit many; both you and I, reader. No, stop; that's not civil. You, reader, I know, are a saint; I am *not*, though very near it. I *do* err at long intervals; and then I think with indulgence of the many circumstances that plead for this poor girl. The Spanish armies of that day inherited, from the days of Cortes and Pizarro, shining remembrances
10 of martial prowess, and the very worst of ethics. To think little of bloodshed, to quarrel, to fight, to gamble, to plunder, belonged to the very atmosphere of a camp, to its indolence, to its ancient traditions. In your own defence, you were obliged to do such things. Besides all these grounds of evil, the Spanish army had just then an extra demoralization from a war with savages—faithless and bloody. Do not think too much, reader, of killing a man—do not, I beseech you! That word '*kill*' is sprinkled over every page
20 of Kate's own autobiography. It ought not to be read by the light of these days. Yet, how if a man that she killed were ——? Hush! It was sad; but is better hurried over in a few words. Years after this period, a young officer, one day dining with Kate, entreated her to become his second in a duel. Such things were every-day affairs. However, Kate had reasons for declining the service, and did so. But the officer, as he was sullenly departing, said, that if he were killed (as he thought he *should* be), his
30 death would lie at Kate's door. I do not take *his* view of the case, and am not moved by his rhetoric or his logic. Kate *was*, and relented. The duel was fixed for eleven at night, under the walls of a monastery. Unhappily, the night proved unusually dark, so that the two principals had to tie white handkerchiefs round their elbows, in order to descry each other. In the confusion they wounded each other mortally. Upon that, according to a usage not peculiar to Spaniards, but extending (as doubtless
40 the reader knows) for a century longer to our own countrymen, the two seconds were obliged in honour

to do something towards avenging their principals. Kate had her usual fatal luck. Her sword passed sheer through the body of her opponent: this unknown opponent falling dead, had just breath left to cry out, 'Ah, villain, you have killed me!' in a voice of horrific reproach; and the voice was the voice of her brother!

The monks of the monastery under whose silent shadows this murderous duel had taken place, roused by the clashing of swords and the angry shouts of 10 combatants, issued out with torches, to find one only of the four officers surviving. Every convent and altar had the right of asylum for a short period. According to the custom, the monks carried Kate, insensible with anguish of mind, to the sanctuary of their chapel. There for some days they detained her; but then, having furnished her with a horse and some provisions, they turned her adrift. Which way should the unhappy fugitive turn? In blindness of heart, she turned towards the sea. It was the sea that had 20 brought her to Peru; it was the sea that would perhaps carry her away. It was the sea that had first showed her this land and its golden hopes; it was the sea that ought to hide from her its fearful remembrances. The sea it was that had twice spared her life in extremities; the sea it was that might now, if it chose, take back the bauble that it had spared in vain.

16. KATE'S ASCENT OF THE ANDES

Three days our poor heroine followed the coast. 30 Her horse was then almost unable to move; and on his account she turned inland to a thicket, for grass and shelter. As she drew near to it, a voice challenged, 'Who goes there?'—Kate answered, 'Spain.'—'What people?'—'A friend.' It was two soldiers, deserters, and almost starving. Kate shared her provisions with these men: and, on hearing their plan, which was to go over the *cordilleras*, she agreed to join the party. Their object was the wild one of seeking

the river Dorado, whose waters rolled along golden sands, and whose pebbles were emeralds. *Hers* was to throw herself upon a line the least liable to pursuit, and the readiest for a new chapter of life, in which oblivion might be found for the past. After a few days of incessant climbing and fatigue, they found themselves in the regions of perpetual snow. Summer came even hither; but came as vainly to this kingdom of frost as to the grave of her brother. No fire, but
10 the fire of human blood in youthful veins, could ever be kept burning in these aerial solitudes. Fuel was rarely to be found, and kindling a fire by interfriction of dry sticks was a secret almost exclusively Indian. However, our Kate can do everything; and she's the girl, if ever girl *did* such a thing, that I back at any odds for crossing the *cordilleras*. I would bet you something now, reader, if I thought you would deposit your stakes by return of post (as they play at chess through the post office), that Kate does the trick; that
20 she gets down to the other side; that the soldiers do *not*; and that the horse, if preserved at all, is preserved in a way that will leave him very little to boast of.

The party had gathered wild berries and esculent roots at the foot of the mountains, and the horse was of very great use in carrying them. But this larder was soon emptied. There was nothing then to carry; so that the horse's value, as a beast of burden, fell cent. per cent. In fact, very soon he could not carry
30 himself, and it became easy to calculate when he would reach the bottom on the wrong side the *cordilleras*. He took three steps back for one upwards. A council of war being held, the small army resolved to slaughter their horse. He, though a member of the expedition, had no vote; and, if he had, the votes would have stood three to one—majority, two against him. He was cut into quarters; a difficult fraction to distribute amongst a triad of claimants. No salt-petre or sugar could be had: but the frost was anti-
40 septic. And the horse was preserved in as useful a sense as ever apricots were preserved or strawberries;

and *that* was the kind of preservation which one page ago I promised to the horse.

On a fire, painfully devised out of broom and withered leaves, a horse-steak was dressed ; for drink, snow was allowed *à discretion*. This ought to have revived the party, and Kate, perhaps, it *did*. But the poor deserters were thinly clad, and they had not the boiling heart of Catalina. More and more they drooped. Kate did her best to cheer them. But the march was nearly at an end for *them* ; and they were going in one 10 half-hour to receive their last billet. Yet, before this consummation, they have a strange spectacle to see ; such as few places could show but the upper chambers of the *cordilleras*. They had reached a billowy scene of rocky masses, large and small, looking shockingly black on their perpendicular sides as they rose out of the vast snowy expanse. Upon the highest of these that was accessible, Kate mounted to look around her, and she saw—oh, rapture at such an hour!—a man sitting on a shelf of rock, with a gun by his side. 20 Joyously she shouted to her comrades, and ran down to communicate the good news. Here was a sportsman, watching, perhaps, for an eagle ; and now they would have relief. One man's cheek kindled with the hectic of sudden joy, and he rose eagerly to march. The other was fast sinking under the fatal sleep that frost sends before herself as her merciful minister of death ; but hearing in his dream the tidings of relief, and assisted by his friends, he also staggeringly arose. It could not be three minutes' walk, Kate 30 thought, to the station of the sportsman. That thought supported them all. Under Kate's guidance, who had taken a sailor's glance at the bearings, they soon unthreaded the labyrinth of rocks so far as to bring the man within view. He had not left his resting-place ; their steps on the soundless snow, naturally, he could not hear ; and, as their road brought them upon him from the rear, still less could he see them. Kate hailed him ; but so keenly was he absorbed in some speculation, or in the object of his 40 watching, that he took no notice of them, not even

moving his head. Coming close behind him, Kate touched his shoulder, and said, 'My friend, are you sleeping?' Yes, he *was* sleeping; sleeping the sleep from which there is no awaking; and the slight touch of Kate having disturbed the equilibrium of the corpse, down it rolled on the snow: the frozen body rang like a hollow iron cylinder; the face uppermost and blue with mould, mouth open, teeth ghastly and bleaching in the frost, and a frightful grin upon the lips. This
 10 dreadful spectacle finished the struggles of the weaker man, who sank and died at once. The other made an effort with so much spirit, that, in Kate's opinion, horror had acted upon him beneficially as a stimulant. But it was not really so. It was simply a spasm of morbid strength. A collapse succeeded; his blood began to freeze; he sat down in spite of Kate, and *he* also died without further struggle. Yes, gone are the poor suffering deserters; stretched out and bleaching upon the snow; and insulted discipline is avenged.
 20 Great kings have long arms; and sycophants are ever at hand for the errand of the potent. What had frost and snow to do with the quarrel? Yet *they* made themselves sycophantic servants to the King of Spain; and *they* it was that dogged his deserters up to the summit of the *cordilleras*, more surely than any Spanish bloodhound, or any Spanish *tirailleur's* bullet.

17. KATE STANDS ALONE ON THE SUMMIT OF THE ANDES

Now is our Kate standing alone on the summit
 30 of the Andes; and in solitude that is frightful, for she is alone with her own afflicted conscience. Twice before she had stood in solitude as deep upon the wild, wild waters of the Pacific; but her conscience had been then untroubled. Now is there nobody left that can help; her horse is dead—the soldiers are dead. There is nobody that she can speak to, except God; and very soon you will find that she *does* speak to Him; for already on these vast aerial deserts He has been whispering to *her*. The condition of Kate in some

respects resembled that of Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. But possibly, reader, you may be amongst the many careless readers that have never fully understood what that condition was. Suffer me to enlighten you; else you ruin the story of the mariner; and by losing all its pathos, lose half its beauty.

There are three readers of the *Ancient Mariner*. The first is gross enough to fancy all the imagery of the mariner's visions delivered by the poet for actual facts of experience; which being impossible, the whole 10 pulverizes, for that reader, into a baseless fairy tale. The second reader is wiser than *that*; he knows that the imagery is the imagery of febrile delirium; really seen, but not seen as an external reality. The mariner had caught the pestilential fever, which carried off all his mates; he only had survived—the delirium had vanished; but the visions that had haunted the delirium remained. 'Yes,' says the third reader, 'they remained; naturally they did, being scorched by fever into his brain; but how did they happen to remain 20 on his belief as gospel truths? The delirium had vanished: why had not the painted scenery of the delirium vanished, except as visionary memorials of a sorrow that was cancelled? Why was it that craziness settled upon this mariner's brain, driving him, as if he were a Cain, or another Wandering Jew, to "pass like night from land to land"; and, at uncertain intervals, wrenching him until he made rehearsal of his errors, even at the difficult cost of "holding children from their play, and old men from the 30 chimney corner"?' That craziness, as the *third* reader deciphers, rose out of a deeper soil than any bodily affection. It had its root in penitential sorrow. Oh, bitter is the sorrow to a conscientious heart, when, too late, it discovers the depth of a love that has been trampled under foot! This mariner had slain the creature that, on all the earth, loved him best. In the darkness of his cruel superstition he had done it, to save his human brothers from a fancied inconvenience; and yet, by that very act of cruelty, 40 he had himself called destruction upon their heads.

The Nemesis that followed punished *him* through *them*—him that wronged, through those that wrongfully he sought to benefit. That spirit who watches over the sanctities of love is a strong angel—is a jealous angel; and this angel it was

That loved the bird, that loved the man
That shot him with his bow.

He it was that followed the cruel archer into silent and slumbering seas:—

10 Nine fathom deep he had follow'd him,
Through the realms of mist and snow.

This jealous angel it was that pursued the man into noonday darkness, and the vision of dying oceans, into delirium, and finally (when recovered from disease), into an unsettled mind.

Not altogether unlike, though free from the criminal intention of the mariner, had been the offence of Kate; not unlike, also, was the punishment that now is dogging her steps. She, like the mariner, had slain
20 the one sole creature that loved her upon the whole wide earth; she, like the mariner, for this offence, had been hunted into frost and snow—very soon will be hunted into delirium; and from *that* (if she escapes with life), will be hunted into the trouble of a heart that cannot rest. There was the excuse of one darkness, physical darkness, for *her*; there was the excuse of another darkness, the darkness of superstition, for the mariner. But, with all the excuses that earth, and the darkness of earth, can furnish, bitter it would
30 be for any of us, reader, through every hour of life, waking or dreaming, to look back upon one fatal moment when we had pierced the heart that would have died for *us*. In this only the darkness had been merciful to Kate—that it had hidden for ever from her victim the hand that slew him. But now, in such utter solitude, her thoughts ran back to their earliest interview. She remembered with anguish, how, on touching the shores of America, almost the first word that met her ear had been from *him*, the

brother whom she had killed, about the Pussy of times long past; how the gallant young man had hung upon her words, as in her native Basque she described her own mischievous little self, of twelve years back; how his colour went and came, whilst his loving memory of the little sister was revived by her own descriptive traits, giving back, as in a mirror, the fawn-like grace, the squirrel-like restlessness, that once had kindled his own delighted laughter; how he would take no denial, but showed on the spot, 10 that simply to have touched—to have kissed—to have played with the little wild thing, that glorified, by her innocence, the gloom of St. Sebastian's cloisters, gave a *right* to his hospitality; how, through *him* only, she had found a welcome in camps; how, through *him*, she had found the avenue to honour and distinction. And yet this brother, so loving and generous, who, without knowing, had cherished and protected her, and all from pure holy love for herself as the innocent plaything of St. Sebastian's, *him* in 20 a moment she had dismissed from life. She paused; she turned round, as if looking back for his grave; she saw the dreadful wildernesses of snow which already she had traversed. Silent they were at this season, even as in the panting heats of noon the Saharas of the torrid zone are oftentimes silent. Dreadful was the silence; it was the nearest thing to the silence of the grave. Graves were at the foot of the Andes, *that* she knew too well; graves were at the summit of the Andes, *that* she saw too well. And, as she gazed, 30 a sudden thought flashed upon her, when her eyes settled upon the corpses of the poor deserters—Could she, like *them*, have been all this while unconsciously executing judgement upon herself? Running from a wrath that was doubtful, into the very jaws of a wrath that was inexorable? Flying in panic—and behold! there was no man that pursued? For the first time in her life, Kate trembled. *Not* for the first time, Kate wept. Far less for the first time was it, that Kate bent her knee—that Kate clasped her hands 40—that Kate prayed. But it *was* the first time that

she prayed as *they* pray, for whom no more hope is left but in prayer.

Here let me pause a moment, for the sake of making somebody angry. A Frenchman, who sadly misjudges Kate, looking at her through a Parisian opera-glass, gives it as *his* opinion—that, because Kate first *records* her prayer on this occasion, therefore now first of all she prayed. *I* think not so. *I* love this Kate, blood-stained as she is; and *I* could not love a woman that never bent her knee in thankfulness or in supplication. However, we have all a right to our own little opinion; and it is not *you*, ‘*mon cher*,’ you Frenchman, that *I* am angry with, but somebody else that stands behind you. You, Frenchman, and your compatriots, *I* love oftentimes for your festal gaiety of heart; and *I* quarrel only with your levity, and that eternal worldliness that freezes too fiercely—that absolutely blisters with its frost, like the upper air of the Andes. *You* speak of Kate only as too readily you speak of all women; the instinct of a natural scepticism being to scoff at all hidden depths of truth. Else you are civil enough to Kate; and your *hommage* (such as it may happen to be) is always at the service of a woman on the shortest notice. But behind *you* *I* see a worse fellow—a gloomy fanatic, a religious sycophant, that seeks to propitiate his circle by bitterness against the offences that are most unlike his own. And against him, *I* must say one word for Kate to the too hasty reader. This villain opens his fire on our Kate under shelter of a lie. For there is a standing lie in the very constitution of civil society—a *necessity* of error, misleading us as to the proportions of crime. Mere necessity obliges man to create many acts into felonies, and to punish them as the heaviest offences, which his better sense teaches him secretly to regard as perhaps among the lightest. Those poor mutineers or deserters, for instance, were they necessarily without excuse? They might have been oppressively used; but, in critical times of war, no matter for the individual palliations, the mutineer *must* be shot; there is no help for it:

as, in extremities of general famine, we shoot the man (alas! we are *obliged* to shoot him) that is found robbing the common stores, in order to feed his own perishing children, though the offence is hardly visible in the sight of God. Only blockheads adjust their scale of guilt to the scale of human punishments. Now, our wicked friend the fanatic, who calumniates Kate, abuses the advantage which, for such a purpose, he derives from the exaggerated social estimate of all violence. Personal security being so main an object 10 of social union, we are obliged to frown upon all modes of violence, as hostile to the central principle of that union. We are *obliged* to rate it, according to the universal results towards which it tends, and scarcely at all according to the special condition of circumstances in which it may originate. Hence a horror arises for that class of offences, which is (philosophically speaking) exaggerated: and by daily use, the ethics of a police-office translate themselves, insensibly, into the ethics even of religious people. But 20 I tell that sycophantish fanatic—not this only, viz., that he abuses unfairly, against Kate, the advantage which he has from the *inevitably* distorted bias of society; but also I tell him this second little thing, that, upon turning away the glass from that one obvious aspect of Kate's character, her too fiery disposition to vindicate all rights by violence, and viewing her in relation to *general* religious capacities, she was a thousand times more promisingly endowed than himself. It is impossible to be noble in many things, 30 without having many points of contact with true religion. If you deny *that*, you it is that calumniate religion. Kate *was* noble in many things. Her worst errors never took a shape of self-interest or deceit. She was brave, she was generous, she was forgiving, she bore no malice, she was full of truth—qualities that God loves either in man or woman. She hated sycophants and dissemblers. I hate them; and more than ever at this moment on her behalf. I wish she were but here, to give a punch on the head to that 40 fellow who traduces her. And, coming round again

to the occasion from which this short digression has started—viz., the question raised by the Frenchman, whether Kate were a person likely to *pray* under other circumstances than those of extreme danger—I offer it as *my* opinion, that she was. Violent people are not always such from choice, but perhaps from situation. And, though the circumstances of Kate's position allowed her little means for realizing her own wishes, it is certain that those wishes pointed 10 continually to peace and an unworldly happiness, if *that* were possible. The stormy clouds that enveloped her in camps, opened overhead at intervals, showing her a far-distant blue serene. She yearned, at many times, for the rest which is not in camps or armies; and it is certain, that she ever combined with any plans or day-dreams of tranquillity, as their most essential ally, some aid derived from that dove-like religion which, at St. Sebastian's, from her infant days she had been taught so profoundly to adore.

20 18. KATE BEGINS TO DESCEND THE MIGHTY STAIRCASE

Now, let us rise from this discussion of Kate against libellers, as Kate herself is rising from prayer, and consider, in conjunction with *her*, the character and promise of that dreadful ground which lies immediately before her. What is to be thought of it? I could wish we had a theodolite here, and a spirit-level, and other instruments, for settling some important questions. Yet, no: on consideration, if one *had* a wish 30 allowed by that kind fairy, without whose assistance it would be quite impossible to send even for the spirit-level, nobody would throw away the wish upon things so paltry. I would not put the fairy upon such an errand: I would order the good creature to bring no spirit-level, but a stiff glass of spirits for Kate; also, next after which I would request a palanquin, and relays of fifty stout bearers—all drunk, in order that they might not feel the cold. The main interest at this moment, and the main difficulty—indeed, the 'open question' of the case—was, to ascertain whether

the ascent were yet accomplished or not ; and when would the descent commence ? or had it, perhaps, long commenced ? The character of the ground, in those immediate successions that could be connected by the eye, decided nothing ; for the undulations of the level had been so continual for miles, as to perplex any eye, even an engineer's, in attempting to judge whether, upon the whole, the tendency were upwards or downwards. Possibly it was yet neither way ; it is, indeed, probable, that Kate had been for some time travelling 10 along a series of terraces, that traversed the whole breadth of the topmost area at that point of crossing the *cordilleras* ; and this area, perhaps, but not certainly, might compensate any casual tendencies downwards by corresponding re-ascents. Then came the question, how long would these terraces yet continue ? and had the ascending parts *really* balanced the descending ? Upon *that* seemed to rest the final chance for Kate. Because, unless she very soon reached a lower level, and a warmer atmosphere, mere weariness would oblige her to lie down, under a fierceness of cold that would not suffer her to rise after once losing the warmth of motion ; or, inversely, if she even continued in motion, continued extremity of cold would, of itself, speedily absorb the little surplus energy for moving, which yet remained unexhausted by weariness ; that is, in short, the excessive weariness would give a murderous advantage to the cold, or the excessive cold would give a corresponding advantage to the weariness. 20

At this stage of her progress, and whilst the agonizing question seemed yet as indeterminate as ever, Kate's struggle with despair, which had been greatly soothed by the fervour of her prayer, revolved upon her in deadlier blackness. All turned, she saw, upon a race against time, and the arrears of the road ; and she, poor thing ! how little qualified could *she* be, in such a condition, for a race of any kind ; and against two such obstinate brutes as Time and Space ! This hour of the progress, this noontide of Kate's struggle, must 40 have been the very crisis of the whole. Despair was

rapidly tending to ratify itself. Hope, in any degree, would be a cordial for sustaining her efforts. But to flounder along a dreadful chaos of snow-drifts, or snow-chasms, towards a point of rock, which, being turned, should expose only another interminable succession of the same character—might *that* be endured by ebbing spirits, by stiffening limbs, by the ghastly darkness that was now beginning to gather upon the inner eye? And, if once despair became triumphant, all the little
10 arrear of physical strength would collapse at once.

Oh! verdure of human fields, cottages of men and women (that now suddenly, in the eyes of Kate, seemed all brothers and sisters), cottages with children around them at play, that are so far below—oh! spring and summer, blossoms and flowers, to which, as to *his* symbols, God has given the gorgeous privilege of rehearsing for ever upon earth his most mysterious perfection—Life, and the resurrections of Life—is it indeed true that poor Kate must never see you more?
20 Mutteringly she put that question to herself. But strange are the caprices of ebb and flow in the deep fountains of human sensibilities. At this very moment, when the utter incapacitation of despair was gathering fast at Kate's heart, a sudden lightning, as it were, or flashing inspiration of hope, shot far into her spirit, a reflux almost supernatural, from the earliest effects of her prayer. Dimmed and confused had been the accuracy of her sensations for hours; but all at once a strong conviction came over her—that
30 more and more was the sense of descent becoming steady and continuous. Turning round to measure backwards with her eye the ground traversed through the last half-hour, she identified, by a remarkable point of rock, the spot near which the three corpses were lying. The silence seemed deeper than ever. Neither was there any phantom memorial of life for the eye or for the ear, nor wing of bird, nor echo, nor green leaf, nor creeping thing that moved or stirred, upon the soundless waste. Oh, what a relief to this
40 burden of silence would be a human groan! Here seemed a motive for still darker despair. And yet, at

that very moment, a pulse of joy began to thaw the ice at her heart. It struck her, as she reviewed the ground, from that point where the corpses lay, that undoubtedly it had been for some time slowly descending. Her senses were much dulled by suffering; but this thought it was, suggested by a sudden apprehension of a continued descending movement, which had caused her to turn round. Sight had confirmed the suggestion first derived from her own steps. The distance attained was now sufficient to establish the 10 tendency. Oh, yes, yes, to a certainty she *was* descending—she *had* been descending for some time. Frightful was the spasm of joy which whispered that the worst was over. It was as when the shadow of midnight, that murderers had relied on, is passing away from your beleaguered shelter, and dawn will soon be manifest. It was as when a flood, that all day long has raved against the walls of your house, ceases (you suddenly think) to rise; yes! measured by a golden plummet, it is sinking beyond a doubt, and the darlings 20 of your household are saved. Kate faced round in agitation to her proper direction. She saw, what previously, in her stunning confusion, she had *not* seen, that, hardly two stones' throw in advance, lay a mass of rock, split as into a gateway. Through that opening it now became certain that the road was lying. Hurrying forward, she passed within these natural gates. Gates of paradise they were. Ah, what a vista did that gateway expose before her dazzled eye! what a revelation of heavenly promise! Full two miles 30 long, stretched a long narrow glen, everywhere descending, and in many parts rapidly. All was now placed beyond a doubt. She *was* descending; for hours, perhaps, *had* been descending insensibly, the mighty staircase. Yes, Kate is leaving behind her the kingdom of frost and the victories of death. Two miles farther, there may be rest, if there is not shelter. And very soon, as the crest of her new-born happiness, she distinguished at the other end of that rocky vista a pavilion-shaped mass of dark green foliage—a belt of 40 trees, such as we see in the lovely parks of England,

but islanded by a screen of thick bushy undergrowth. Oh, verdure of dark olive foliage, offered suddenly to fainting eyes, as if by some winged patriarchal herald of wrath relenting—solitary Arab's tent, rising with saintly signals of peace, in the dreadful desert, must Kate indeed die even yet, whilst she sees but cannot reach you? Outpost on the frontier of man's dominions, standing within life, but looking out upon everlasting death, wilt thou hold up the anguish of thy mocking
10 invitation, only to betray? Never, perhaps, in this world was the line so exquisitely grazed, that parts salvation and ruin. As the dove to her dovecot from the swooping hawk; as the Christian pinnacle to the shelter of Christian batteries, from the bloody Mohammedan corsair, so flew—so tried to fly towards the anchoring thickets, that, alas! could not weigh their anchors, and make sail to meet her—the poor exhausted Kate from the vengeance of pursuing frost.

And she reached them; staggering, fainting, reeling,
20 she entered beneath the canopy of umbrageous trees. But as oftentimes the Hebrew fugitive to a city of refuge, flying for his life before the avenger of blood, was pressed so hotly, that, on entering the archway of what seemed to *him* the heavenly city gate, as he kneeled in deep thankfulness to kiss its holy merciful shadow, he could not rise again, but sank instantly with infant weakness into sleep—sometimes to wake no more; so sank, so collapsed upon the ground, without power to choose her couch, and with little
30 prospect of ever rising again to her feet, the martial nun. She lay as luck had ordered it, with her head screened by the undergrowth of bushes from any gales that might arise; she lay exactly as she sank, with her eyes up to heaven; and thus it was that the nun saw, before falling asleep, the two sights that upon earth are fittest for the closing eyes of a nun, whether destined to open again, or to close for ever. She saw the interlacing of boughs overhead forming a dome, that seemed like the dome of a cathedral. She saw,
40 through the fretwork of the foliage, another dome, far beyond, the dome of an evening sky, the dome of some

heavenly cathedral, not built with hands. She saw upon this upper dome the vesper lights, all alive with pathetic grandeur of colouring from a sunset that had just been rolling down like a chorus. She had not, till now, consciously observed the time of day ; whether it were morning, or whether it were afternoon, in the confusion of her misery, she had not distinctly known. But now she whispered to herself, 'It is evening': and what lurked half unconsciously in these words might be, 'The sun, that rejoices, has finished his¹⁰ daily toil ; man, that labours, has finished *his* ; I, that suffer, have finished mine.' That might be what she thought, but what she *said* was, 'It is evening ; and the hour is come when the Angelus is sounding through St. Sebastian.' What made her think of St. Sebastian, so far away in depths of space and time ? Her brain was wandering, now that her feet were *not* ; and, because her eyes had descended from the heavenly to the earthly dome, *that* made her think of earthly cathedrals, and of cathedral choirs, and of St. Sebastian's²⁰ chapel, with its silvery bells that carried the echoing Angelus far into mountain recesses. Perhaps, as her wanderings increased, she thought herself back into childhood ; became Pussy once again ; fancied that all since then was a frightful dream ; that she was not upon the dreadful Andes, but still kneeling in the holy chapel at vespers ; still innocent as then ; loved as then she had been loved ; and that all men were liars, who said her hand was ever stained with blood. Little is mentioned of the delusions which possessed her ;³⁰ but that little gives a key to the impulse which her palpitating heart obeyed, and which her rambling brain for ever reproduced in multiplying mirrors. Restlessness kept her in waking dreams for a brief half-hour. But then fever and delirium would wait no longer ; the killing exhaustion would no longer be refused ; the fever, the delirium, and the exhaustion, swept in together with power like an army with banners ; and the nun ceased through the gathering twilight any more to watch the cathedrals of earth, or the more⁴⁰ solemn cathedrals that rose in the heavens above.

19. KATE'S BEDROOM IS INVADIED BY HORSEMEN

All night long she slept in her verdurous St. Bernard's hospice without awaking; and whether she would ever awake seemed to depend upon an accident. The slumber that towered above her brain was like that fluctuating silvery column which stands in scientific tubes, sinking, rising, deepening, lightening, contracting, expanding; or like the mist that sits, through sultry afternoons, upon the river of the American St. Peter, sometimes rarefying for minutes into sunny gauze, sometimes condensing for hours into palls of funereal darkness. You fancy that, after twelve hours of *any* sleep, she must have been refreshed; better, at least, than she was last night. Ah! but sleep is not always sent upon missions of refreshment. Sleep is sometimes the secret chamber in which death arranges his machinery, and stations his artillery. Sleep is sometimes that deep mysterious atmosphere, in which the human spirit is slowly unsettling its wings for flight from earthly tenements. It is now eight o'clock in the morning; and, to all appearance, if Kate should receive no aid before noon, when next the sun is departing to his rest, then, alas! Kate will be departing to hers; when next the sun is holding out his golden Christian signal to man, that the hour is come for letting his anger go down, Kate will be sleeping away for ever into the arms of brotherly forgiveness.

What is wanted just now for Kate, supposing Kate herself to be wanted by this world, is, that this world would be kind enough to send her a little brandy before it is too late. The simple truth was, and a truth which I have known to take place in more ladies than Kate, who died or did *not* die, accordingly as they had or had not an adviser like myself, capable of giving an opinion equal to Captain Bunsby's, on this point, viz., whether the jewelly star of life had descended too far down the arch towards setting, for any chance of reascending by *spontaneous* effort. The fire was still burning in secret, but needed, perhaps, to be rekindled by potent artificial breath. It lingered,

and *might* linger, but apparently would never culminate again, without some stimulus from earthly vineyards. Kate was ever lucky, though ever unfortunate; and the world, being of my opinion that Kate was worth saving, made up its mind about half-past eight o'clock in the morning to save her. Just at that time, when the night was over, and its sufferings were hidden—in one of those intermitting gleams that for a moment or two lightened the clouds of her slumber—Kate's dull ear caught a sound that for years had 10 spoken a familiar language to *her*. What was it? It was the sound, though muffled and deadened, like the ear that heard it, of horsemen advancing. Interpreted by the tumultuous dreams of Kate, was it the cavalry of Spain, at whose head so often she had charged the bloody Indian scalpers? Was it, according to the legend of ancient days, cavalry that had been sown by her brother's blood—cavalry that rose from the ground on an inquest of retribution, and were racing up the Andes to seize her? Her dreams, that had opened 20 sullenly to the sound, waited for no answer, but closed again into pompous darkness. Happily, the horsemen had caught the glimpse of some bright ornament, clasp, or aiguillette, on Kate's dress. They were hunters and foresters from below—servants in the household of a beneficent lady; and, in pursuit of some flying game, had wandered far beyond their ordinary limits. Struck by the sudden scintillation from Kate's dress played upon by the morning sun, they rode up to the thicket. Great was their surprise, 30 great their pity, to see a young officer in uniform stretched within the bushes upon the ground, and apparently dying. Borderers from childhood on this dreadful frontier, sacred to winter and death, they understood the case at once. They dismounted, and, with the tenderness of women, raising the poor frozen Cornet in their arms, washed her temples with brandy, whilst one, at intervals, suffered a few drops to trickle within her lips. As the restoration of a warm bed was now most likely to be the one thing needed, they 40 lifted the helpless stranger upon a horse, walking on

each side with supporting arms. Once again our Kate is in the saddle, once again a Spanish *caballero*. But Kate's bridle-hand is deadly cold. And her spurs, that she had never unfastened since leaving the monastic asylum, hung as idle as the flapping sail that fills unsteadily with the breeze upon a stranded ship.

This procession had many miles to go, and over difficult ground; but at length it reached the forest-like park and the chateau of the wealthy proprietress.

10 Kate was still half-frozen and speechless, except at intervals. Heavens! can this corpse-like, languishing young woman be the Kate that once, in her radiant girlhood, rode with a handful of comrades into a column of two thousand enemies, that saw her comrades die, that persisted when all were dead, that tore from the heart of all resistance the banner of her native Spain? Chance and change have 'written strange defeatures in her face'. Much is changed; but some things are not changed, either in herself or in those about her:

20 there is still kindness that overflows with pity: there is still helplessness that asks for this pity without a voice: she is now received by a señora, not less kind than that maternal aunt who, on the night of her birth, first welcomed her to a loving home; and she, the heroine of Spain, is herself as helpless now as that little lady who, then at ten minutes of age, was kissed and blessed by all the household of St. Sebastian.

20. A SECOND LULL IN KATE'S STORMY LIFE

Let us suppose Kate placed in a warm bed. Let us

30 suppose her in a few hours recovering steady consciousness; in a few days recovering some power of self-support; in a fortnight able to seek the gay saloon, where the señora was sitting alone, and able to render thanks, with that deep sincerity which ever characterized our wild-hearted Kate, for the critical services received from that lady and her establishment.

This lady, a widow, was what the French call a *Métisse*, the Spaniards a *Mestizza*—that is, the daughter

of a genuine Spaniard, and an Indian mother. I will call her simply a *Creole*, which will indicate her want of pure Spanish blood sufficiently to explain her deference for those who had it. She was a kind, liberal woman; rich rather more than needed where there were no opera-boxes to rent; a widow about fifty years old in the wicked world's account, some forty-two in her own; and happy, above all, in the possession of a most lovely daughter, whom even the wicked world did not accuse of more than sixteen years. This daughter, Juana, was — But stop—let her open the door of the saloon in which the señora and the Cornet are conversing, and speak for herself. She did so, after an hour had passed; which length of time, to *her* that never had any business whatever in her innocent life, seemed sufficient to settle the business of the Old World and the New. Had Pietro Diaz (as Catalina now called herself) been really a Peter, and not a sham Peter, what a vision of loveliness would have rushed upon his sensibilities as the door opened. Do not expect me to describe her, for which, however, there are materials extant, sleeping in archives, where they have slept for two hundred and twenty-eight years. It is enough that she is reported to have united the stately tread of Andalusian women with the innocent voluptuousness of Peruvian eyes. As to her complexion and figure, be it known that Juana's father was a gentleman from Grenada, having in his veins the grandest blood of all this earth—blood of Goths and Vandals, tainted (for which Heaven be thanked!) twice over with blood of Arabs—once through Moors, once through Jews; whilst from her grandmother Juana drew the deep subtle melancholy, and the beautiful contours of limb, which belong to the Indian race—a race destined (ah, wherefore?) silently and slowly to fade away from the earth. No awkwardness was or could be in this antelope, when gliding with forest grace into the room; no town-bred shame; nothing but the unaffected pleasure of one who wishes to speak a fervent welcome, but knows not if she ought; the astonishment of a Miranda, bred in utter solitude, when first

beholding a princely Ferdinand, and just so much reserve as to remind you, that, if Catalina thought fit to dissemble her sex, she did *not*. And consider, reader, if you look back, and are a great arithmetician, that whilst the señora had only fifty per cent. of Spanish blood, Juana had seventy-five; so that her Indian melancholy, after all, was swallowed up for the present by her Visigothic, by her Vandal, by her Arab, by her Spanish fire.

10 Catalina, seared as she was by the world, has left it evident in her memoirs that she was touched more than she wished to be by this innocent child. Juana formed a brief lull for Catalina in her too stormy existence. And if for *her* in this life the sweet reality of a sister had been possible, here was the sister she would have chosen. On the other hand, what might Juana think of the Cornet? To have been thrown upon the kind hospitalities of her native home, to have been rescued by her mother's servants from that fear-
 20 ful death which, lying but a few miles off, had filled her nursery with traditionary tragedies—that was sufficient to create an interest in the stranger. Such things it had been that wooed the heavenly Desdemona. But his bold martial demeanour, his yet youthful style of beauty, his frank manners, his animated conversation, that reported a hundred contests with suffering and peril, wakened for the first time her admiration. Men she had never seen before, except menial servants, or a casual priest. But here was a gentleman, young
 30 like herself, a splendid cavalier, that rode in the cavalry of Spain; that carried the banner of the only potentate whom Peruvians knew of—the King of the Spains and the Indies; that had doubled Cape Horn; that had crossed the Andes; that had suffered shipwreck; that had rocked upon fifty storms; and had wrestled for life through fifty battles.

The reader already guesses all that followed. The sisterly love, which Catalina did really feel for this young mountaineer, was inevitably misconstrued.
 40 Embarrassed, but not able, from sincere affection, or almost in bare propriety, to refuse such expressions of

feeling as corresponded to the artless and involuntary kindnesses of the ingenuous Juana, one day the Cornet was surprised by Mamma in the act of encircling her daughter's waist with his martial arm, although waltzing was premature by at least two centuries in Peru. She taxed him instantly with dishonourably abusing her confidence. The Cornet made but a bad defence. He muttered something about 'fraternal affection', about 'esteem', and a great deal of metaphysical words that are destined to remain untranslated in their 10 original Spanish. The good señora, though she could boast only of forty-two years' experience, or say forty-four, was not altogether to be 'had' in that fashion:—she was as learned as if she had been fifty, and she brought matters to a speedy crisis. 'You are a Spaniard,' she said, 'a gentleman, therefore; remember that you are a gentleman. This very night, if your intentions are not serious, quit my house. Go to Tucuman; you shall command my horses and servants; but stay no longer to increase the sorrow that already 20 you will have left behind you. My daughter loves you. That is sorrow enough, if you are trifling with us. But, if not, and you also love *her*, and can be happy in our solitary mode of life, stay with us—stay for ever. Marry Juana with my free consent. I ask not for wealth. Mine is sufficient for you both.' The Cornet protested that the honour was one never contemplated by *him*—that it was too great—that——. But, of course, reader, you know that 'gammon' flourishes in Peru, amongst the silver mines, as well 30 as in some more boreal lands that produce little better than copper and tin. 'Tin,' however, has its uses. The delighted señora overruled all objections, great and small; and she confirmed Juana's notion that the business of two worlds could be transacted in an hour, by settling her daughter's future happiness in exactly twenty minutes. The poor, weak Catalina, not acting now in any spirit of recklessness, grieving sincerely for the gulf that was opening before her, and yet shrinking effeminately from the momentary shock 40 that would be inflicted by a firm adherence to her

duty, clinging to the anodyne of a short delay, allowed herself to be installed as the lover of Juana. Considerations of convenience, however, postponed the marriage. It was requisite to make various purchases; and for this, it was requisite to visit Tucuman, where also the marriage ceremony could be performed with more circumstantial splendour. To Tucuman, therefore, after some weeks' interval, the whole party repaired. And at Tucuman it was that the tragical
10 events arose, which, whilst interrupting such a mockery for ever, left the poor Juana still happily deceived, and never believing for a moment that hers was a rejected or a deluded heart.

One reporter of Mr. De Ferrer's narrative forgets his usual generosity, when he says, that the señora's gift of her daughter to the Alférez was not quite so disinterested as it seemed to be. Certainly it was not so disinterested as European ignorance might fancy it: but it was quite as much so as it ought to have been,
20 in balancing the interests of a child. Very true it is—that, being a genuine Spaniard, who was still a rare creature in so vast a world as Peru—being a Spartan amongst Helots—a Spanish Alférez would in those days, and in that region, have been a natural noble. His alliance created honour for his wife and for his descendants. Something, therefore, the Cornet would add to the family consideration. But, instead of selfishness, it argued just regard for her daughter's interest to build upon this, as some sort of equipoise to the
30 wealth which her daughter would bring.

Spaniard, however, as she was, our Alférez, on reaching Tucuman, found no Spaniards to mix with, but instead, twelve Portuguese.

21. KATE ONCE MORE IN STORMS

Catalina remembered the Spanish proverb, 'Pump out of a Spaniard all his good qualities, and the remainder makes a pretty fair Portuguese'; but, as there was nobody else to gamble with, she entered freely into their society. Soon she suspected that

there was foul play: for all modes of doctoring dice had been made familiar to *her* by the experience of camps. She watched: and, by the time she had lost her final coin, she was satisfied that she had been plundered. In her first anger, she would have been glad to switch the whole dozen across the eyes; but, as twelve to one were too great odds, she determined on limiting her vengeance to the immediate culprit. Him she followed into the street; and coming near enough to distinguish his profile reflected on a wall, 10 she continued to keep him in view from a short distance. The light-hearted young cavalier whistled, as he went, an old Portuguese ballad of romance; and in a quarter of an hour came up to a house, the front-door of which he began to open with a pass-key. This operation was the signal for Catalina that the hour of vengeance had struck; and, stepping up hastily, she tapped the Portuguese on the shoulder, saying, 'Señor, you are a robber!' The Portuguese turned coolly round, and, seeing his gaming antagonist, replied, 20 'Possibly, Sir; but I have no particular fancy for being told so,' at the same time drawing his sword. Catalina had not designed to take any advantage; and the touching him on the shoulder, with the interchange of speeches, and the known character of Kate, sufficiently imply it. But it is too probable, in such cases, that the party whose intention has been regularly settled from the first will, and must, have an advantage unconsciously over a man so abruptly thrown on his defence. However this might be, they 30 had not fought a minute before Catalina passed her sword through her opponent's body; and without a groan or a sigh, the Portuguese cavalier fell dead at his own door. Kate searched the street with her ears, and (as far as the indistinctness of night allowed) with her eyes. All was profoundly silent; and she was satisfied that no human figure was in motion. What should be done with the body? A glance at the door of the house settled *that*: Fernando had himself opened it at the very moment when he received 40 the summons to turn round. She dragged the corpse

in, therefore, to the foot of the staircase, put the key by the dead man's side, and then issuing softly into the street, drew the door close with as little noise as possible. Catalina again paused to listen and to watch, went home to the hospitable señora's house, retired to bed, fell asleep, and early the next morning was awakened by the Corregidor, and four *alpuzils*.

The lawlessness of all that followed strikingly exposes the frightful state of criminal justice at that time, wherever Spanish law prevailed. No evidence appeared to connect Catalina in any way with the death of Fernando Acosta. The Portuguese gamblers, besides that perhaps they thought lightly of such an accident, might have reasons of their own for drawing off public attention from their pursuits in Tucuman: not one of these men came forward openly; else the circumstances at the gaming table, and the departure of Catalina so closely on the heels of her opponent, would have suggested reasonable grounds for detaining her until some further light should be obtained. As it was, her imprisonment rested upon no colourable ground whatever, unless the Magistrate had received some anonymous information, which, however, he never alleged. One comfort there was, meantime, in Spanish injustice: it did not loiter. Full gallop it went over the ground: one week often sufficed for informations—for trial—for execution: and the only bad consequence was, that a second or a third week sometimes exposed the disagreeable fact that everything had been 'premature'; a solemn sacrifice had been made to offended justice, in which all was right except as to the victim; it was the wrong man; and *that* gave extra trouble; for then all was to do over again, another man to be executed, and, possibly, still to be caught.

Justice moved at her usual Spanish rate in the present case. Kate was obliged to rise instantly; not suffered to speak to anybody in the house, though, in going out, a door opened, and she saw the young Juana looking out with her saddest Indian expression.

In one day the trial was finished. Catalina said

(which was true) that she hardly knew Acosta ; and that people of her rank were used to attack their enemies face to face, not by murderous surprises. The Magistrates were impressed with Catalina's answers (yet answers to *what*, or to *whom*, in a case where there was no distinct charge, and no avowed accuser?). Things were beginning to look well, when all was suddenly upset by two witnesses, whom the reader (who is a sort of accomplice after the fact, having been privately let into the truths of the case, and 10 having concealed his knowledge) will know at once to be false witnesses. but whom the old Spanish buzzwigs doted on as models of all that could be looked for in the best. Both were ill-looking fellows, as it was their duty to be. And the first deposed as follows:—That, through *his* quarter of Tucuman, the fact was notorious of Acosta's wife being the object of a criminal pursuit on the part of the Alferez (Catalina): that, doubtless, the injured husband had surprised the prisoner, which, of course, had led to 20 the murder, to the staircase, to the key—to everything, in short, that could be wished ; no—stop ! what am I saying ?—to everything that ought to be abominated. Finally—for he had now settled the main question—that he had a friend who would take up the case where he himself, from short-sightedness, was obliged to lay it down. This friend, the Pythias of this short-sighted Damon, started up in a frenzy of virtue at this summons, and, rushing to the front of the *alguazils*, said, 'That since his friend had proved sufficiently the 30 fact of the Alferez having been lurking in the house, and having murdered a man, all that rested upon *him* to show was, how that murderer got out of that house ; which he could do satisfactorily ; for there was a balcony running along the windows on the second floor, one of which windows he himself, lurking in a corner of the street, saw the Alferez throw up, and from the said balcony take a flying leap into the said street.' Evidence like this was conclusive ; no defence was listened to, nor indeed had the prisoner any to produce. 40 The Alferez could deny neither the staircase nor the

balcony: the street is there to this day, like the bricks in Jack Cade's chimney, testifying all that may be required; and, as to our friend who saw the leap, there he was; nobody could deny him. The prisoner might indeed have suggested that she never heard of Acosta's wife, nor had the existence of such a wife been proved, or even ripened into a suspicion. But the Bench were satisfied; chopping logic in defence was henceforward impertinence; and sentence was
10 pronounced—that, on the eighth day from the day of arrest, the Alférez should be executed in the public square.

It was not amongst the weaknesses of Catalina—who had so often inflicted death, and, by her own journal, thought so lightly of inflicting it (unless under cowardly advantages)—to shrink from facing death in her own person. Many incidents in her career show the coolness and even gaiety with which, in any case where death was apparently inevitable,
20 she would have gone forward to meet it. But in this case she *had* a temptation for escaping it, which was certainly in her power. She had only to reveal the secret of her sex, and the ridiculous witnesses, beyond whose testimony there was nothing at all against her, must at once be covered with derision. Catalina had some liking for fun; and a main inducement to this course was, that it would enable her to say to the Judges, 'Now you see what old fools you've made of yourselves; every woman and child in Peru will soon
30 be laughing at you.' I must acknowledge my own weakness; this last temptation I could *not* have withstood; flesh is weak, and fun is strong. But Catalina *did*. On consideration, she fancied, that although the particular motive for murdering Acosta would be dismissed with laughter, still this might not clear her of the murder, which on some *other* motive she might be supposed to have committed. But, allowing that she were cleared altogether, what most of all she feared was, that the publication of her sex would throw a
40 reflex light upon many past transactions in her life; would instantly find its way to Spain; and would

probably soon bring her within the tender attentions of the Inquisition. She kept firm, therefore, to the resolution of not saving her life by this discovery. And so far as her fate lay in her own hands, she would to a certainty have perished—which to me seems a most fantastic caprice; it was to court a certain death and a present death, in order to evade a remote contingency of death. But even at this point, how strange a case! A woman *falsely* accused (because accused by lying witnesses) of an act which 10 she really *did* commit! And falsely accused of a true offence upon a motive that was impossible!

As the sun was setting upon the seventh day, when the hours were numbered for the prisoner, there filed into her cell four persons in religious habits. They came on the charitable mission of preparing the poor convict for death. Catalina, however, watching all things narrowly, remarked something earnest and significant in the eye of the leader, as of one who had some secret communication to make. She contrived, 20 therefore, to clasp this man's hands, as if in the energy of internal struggles, and *he* contrived to slip into hers the very smallest of billets from poor Juana. It contained, for indeed it *could* contain, only these three words—'Do not confess. J.' This one caution, so simple and so brief, proved a talisman. It did not refer to any confession of the crime; *that* would have been assuming what Juana was neither entitled nor disposed to assume; but it referred, in the technical sense of the Church, to the act of devotional confession. 30 Catalina found a single moment for a glance at it; understood the whole; resolutely refused to confess, as a person unsettled in her religious opinions, that needed spiritual instructions; and the four monks withdrew to make their report. The principal Judge, upon hearing of the prisoner's impenitence, granted another day. At the end of *that*, no change having occurred either in the prisoner's mind or in the circumstances, he issued his warrant for the execution. Accordingly, as the sun went down, the sad procession 40 formed within the prison. Into the great square of

Tucuman it moved, where the scaffold had been built, and the whole city had assembled for the spectacle. Catalina steadily ascended the ladder of the scaffold; even then she resolved not to benefit by revealing her sex; even then it was that she expressed her scorn for the lubberly executioner's mode of tying a knot; did it herself in a 'ship-shape', orthodox manner; received in return the enthusiastic plaudits of the crowd, and so far ran the risk of precipitating her fate; for the
10 timid Magistrates, fearing a rescue from the fiery clamours of the impetuous mob, angrily ordered the executioner to finish the scene. The clatter of a galloping horse, however, at this instant forced them to pause. The crowd opened a road for the agitated horseman, who was the bearer of an order from the President of La Plata to suspend the execution until two prisoners could be examined. The whole was the work of the señora and her daughter. The elder lady, having gathered informations against the witnesses,
20 had pursued them to La Plata. There, by her influence with the Governor, they were arrested; recognized as old malefactors; and in their terror had partly confessed their perjury. Catalina was removed to La Plata; solemnly acquitted; and, by the advice of the President, for the present the connexion with the señora's family was indefinitely postponed.

22. KATE'S PENULTIMATE ADVENTURE

Now was the last but one adventure at hand that ever Catalina should see in the New World. Some
30 fine sights she may yet see in Europe, but nothing after this (*which she has recorded*) in America. Europe, if it had ever heard of her name (as very shortly it *shall* hear), Kings, Pope, Cardinals, if they were but aware of her existence (which in six months they *shall* be), would thirst for an introduction to our Catalina. You hardly thought now, reader, that she was such a great person, or anybody's pet but yours and mine. Bless you, sir, she would scorn to look at *us*. I tell you, that Eminences, Excellencies, Highnesses—nay,

even Royalties and Holinesses, are languishing to see her, or soon *will* be. But how can this come to pass, if she is to continue in her present obscurity? Certainly it cannot without some great *peripetiea*, or vertiginous whirl of fortune; which, therefore, you shall now behold taking place in one turn of her next adventure. *That* shall let in a light, *that* shall throw back a Claude Lorraine gleam over all the past, able to make kings, that would have cared not for her under Peruvian daylight, come to glorify her setting beams. 10

The señora—and, observe, whatever kindness she does to Catalina speaks secretly from two hearts, her own and Juana's—had, by the advice of Mr. President Mendonia, given sufficient money for Catalina's travelling expenses. So far well. But Mr. M. chose to add a little codicil to this bequest of the señora's, never suggested by her or by her daughter. 'Pray,' said this inquisitive President, who surely might have found business enough within his own neighbourhood—'pray, Señor Pietro Diaz, did you ever live at Concep- 20 tion? And were you ever acquainted there with Señor Miguel de Erauso? That man, sir, was my friend.' What a pity that on this occasion Catalina could not venture to be candid! What a capital speech it would have made to say, '*Friend* were you? I think you could hardly be *that*, with seven hundred miles between you. But that man was *my* friend also; and, secondly, my brother. True it is I killed him. But if you happen to know that this was by pure mistake in the dark, what an old rogue you must be to throw 30 *that* in my teeth, which is the affliction of my life!' Again, however, as so often in the same circumstances, Catalina thought that it would cause more ruin than it could heal to be candid; and, indeed, if she were really 'P. Diaz, Esq.', how came she to be brother to the late Mr. Erauso? On consideration, also, if she could not tell *all*, merely to have professed a fraternal connexion which never was avowed by either whilst living together, would not have brightened the reputation of Catalina. Still, from a kindness for poor Kate, 40 I feel uncharitably towards the President for advising

Señor Pietro 'to travel for his health'. What had *he* to do with people's health? However, Mr. Peter, as he had pocketed the señora's money, thought it right to pocket also the advice that accompanied its payment. That he might be in a condition to do so, he went off to buy a horse. On that errand, in all lands, for some reason only half explained, you must be in luck if you do not fall in, and eventually fall out, with a knave. But on this particular day Kate *was* in luck. For, 10 beside money and advice, she obtained, at a low rate, a horse both beautiful and serviceable for a journey. To Paz it was, a city of prosperous name, that the Cornet first moved. But Paz did not fulfil the promise of its name. For it laid the grounds of a feud that drove our Kate out of America.

Her first adventure was a bagatelle, and fitter for a jest-book than for a serious history; yet it proved no jest either, since it led to the tragedy that followed. Riding into Paz, our gallant Standard-Bearer and her 20 bonny black horse drew all eyes, *comme de raison*, upon their separate charms. This was inevitable amongst the indolent population of a Spanish town; and Kate was used to it. But, having recently had a little too much of the public attention, she felt nervous on remarking two soldiers eyeing the handsome horse and the handsome rider, with an attention that seemed too earnest for mere *aesthetics*. However, Kate was not the kind of person to let anything dwell on her spirits, especially if it took the shape of impudence; and, 30 whistling gaily, she was riding forward, when—who should cross her path but the Alcalde of Paz! Ah! Alcalde, you see a person now that has a mission against you and all that you inherit; though a mission known to herself as little as to you. Good were it for you, had you never crossed the path of this Biscayan Alférez. The Alcalde looked so sternly, that Kate asked if his worship had any commands. 'Yes. These men,' said the Alcalde, 'these two soldiers, say that this horse is stolen.' To one who had so narrowly 40 and so lately escaped the balcony witness and his friend, it was really no laughing matter to hear of new

affidavits in preparation. Kate was nervous, but never disconcerted. In a moment she had twitched off a saddle-cloth on which she sat; and throwing it over the horse's head, so as to cover up all between the ears and the mouth, she replied, 'That she had bought and paid for the horse at La Plata. But now, your worship, if this horse has really been stolen from these men, they must know well of which eye it is blind; for it *can* be only in the right eye or the left.' One of the soldiers cried out instantly, that it was the left eye; 10 but the other said, 'No, no; you forget, it's the right.' Kate maliciously called attention to this little schism. But the men said, 'Ah, *that* was nothing—they were hurried; but now, on recollecting themselves, they were agreed that it was the left eye.'—'Did they stand to that?'—'Oh yes, positive they were—left eye—left.'

Upon which our Kate, twitching off the horse-cloth, said gaily to the Magistrate, 'Now, Sir, please to observe that this horse has nothing the matter with 20 either eye.' And, in fact, it *was* so. Upon *that*, his worship ordered his *alguazils* to apprehend the two witnesses, who posted off to bread and water, with other reversionary advantages; whilst Kate rode in quest of the best dinner that Paz could furnish.

23. PREPARATION FOR KATE'S FINAL ADVENTURE IN PERU

This Alcalde's acquaintance, however, was not destined to drop here. Something had appeared in the young *caballero's* bearing which made it painful to 30 have addressed him with harshness, or for a moment to have entertained such a charge against such a person. He dispatched his cousin, therefore, Don Antonio Calderon, to offer his apologies; and at the same time to request that the stranger, whose rank and quality he regretted not to have known, would do him the honour to come and dine with him. This explanation, and the fact that Don Antonio had already proclaimed his own position as cousin to the Magistrate,

and nephew to the Bishop of Cuzco, obliged Catalina to say, after thanking the gentlemen for their obliging attentions, 'I myself hold the rank of Alférez in the service of his Catholic Majesty. I am a native of Biscay, and I am now repairing to Cuzco on private business.'—'To Cuzco!' exclaimed Antonio; 'and you from dear lovely Biscay! How very fortunate! My cousin is a Basque like you; and, like you, he starts for Cuzco to-morrow morning; so that, if it is agreeable
 10 to you, Señor Alférez, we will travel together.' It was settled that they should. To travel—amongst 'balcony witnesses', and anglers for 'blind horses'—not merely with a just man, but with the very abstract idea and riding allegory of justice, was too delightful to the storm-wearied Cornet; and he cheerfully accompanied Don Antonio to the house of the Magistrate, called Don Pedro de Chavarria. Distinguished was his reception; the Alcalde personally renewed his regrets for the ridiculous scene of the two scampish oculists,
 20 and presented Kate to his wife—a most splendid Andalusian beauty, to whom he had been married about a year.

This lady there is a reason for describing; and the French reporter of Catalina's memoirs dwells upon the theme. She united, he says, the sweetness of the German lady with the energy of the Arabian—a combination hard to judge of. As to her feet, he adds, I say nothing, for she had scarcely any at all. '*Je ne parle point de ses pieds, elle n'en avait presque pas.*' 'Poor
 30 lady!' says a compassionate rustic: 'no feet! What a shocking thing that so fine a woman should have been so sadly mutilated!' Oh, my dear rustic, you're quite in the wrong box. The Frenchman means this as the very highest compliment. Beautiful, however, she must have been; and a Cinderella, I hope, but still not a Cinderellula, considering that she had the inimitable walk and step of Andalusian women, which cannot be accomplished without something of a proportionate basis to stand upon.

40 The reason which there is (as I have said) for describing this lady, arises out of her relation to the

tragic events which followed. She, by her criminal levity, was the cause of all. And I must here warn the moralizing blunderer of two errors that he is likely to make: 1st, That he is invited to read some extract from a licentious amour, as if for its own interest; 2nd, or on account of Donna Catalina's memoirs, with a view to relieve their too martial character. I have the pleasure to assure him of his being so utterly in the darkness of error, that any possible change he can make in his opinions, right or left, must be for 10 the better: he cannot stir, but he will mend, which is a delightful thought for the moral and blundering mind. As to the first point, what little glimpse he obtains of a licentious amour is, as a court of justice will sometimes show him such a glimpse, simply to make intelligible the subsequent facts which depend upon it. Secondly, as to the conceit, that Catalina wished to embellish her memoirs, understand that no such practice then existed—certainly not in Spanish literature. Her memoirs are electrifying by their 20 facts; else, in the manner of telling these facts, they are systematically dry.

But let us resume. Don Antonio Calderon was a handsome, accomplished cavalier. And in the course of dinner, Catalina was led to judge, from the behaviour to each other of this gentleman and the lady, the Alcalde's beautiful wife, that they had an improper understanding. This also she inferred from the furtive language of their eyes. Her wonder was, that the Alcalde should be so blind; though upon that point she 30 saw reason in a day or two to change her opinion. Some people see everything by affecting to see nothing. The whole affair, however, was nothing at all to *her*; and she would have dismissed it altogether from her thoughts, but for the dreadful events on the journey.

This went on but slowly, however steadily. Owing to the miserable roads, eight hours a day of travelling was found quite enough for man and beast; the product of which eight hours was from ten to twelve 40 leagues, taking the league at two and a quarter miles.

On the last day but one of the journey, the travelling party, which was precisely the original dinner party, reached a little town ten leagues short of Cuzco. The Corregidor of this place was a friend of the Alcalde; and through *his* influence the party obtained better accommodations than those which they had usually commanded in a hovel calling itself a *venta*, or in a sheltered corner of a barn. The Alcalde was to sleep at the Corregidor's house; the two young cavaliers, 10 Calderon and our Kate, had sleeping rooms at the public *locanda*; but for the lady was reserved a little pleasure-house in an enclosed garden. This was a mere toy of a house; but the season being summer, and the house surrounded with tropical flowers, the lady preferred it (in spite of its loneliness) to the damp mansion of the official grandee, who, in her humble opinion, was quite as fusty as his mansion, and his mansion not much less so than himself.

After dining gaily together at the *locanda*, and 20 possibly taking a 'rise' out of his worship the Corregidor, as a repeating echo of Don Quixote (then growing popular in Spanish America), the young man Don Antonio, who was no young officer, and the young officer Catalina, who was no young man, lounged down together to the little pavilion in the flower-garden, with the purpose of paying their respects to the presiding belle. They were graciously received, and had the honour of meeting there his mustiness the Alcalde, and his fustiness the Corregidor; whose 30 conversation ought surely to have been edifying, since it was anything but brilliant. How they got on under the weight of two such muffs, has been a mystery for two centuries. But they *did* to a certainty, for the party did not break up till eleven. 'Tea and turn out', you could not call it; for there was the 'turn out' in rigour, but not the 'tea'. One thing, however, Catalina by mere accident had an opportunity of observing, and observed with pain. The two official gentlemen, on taking leave, had gone down the steps into the garden, 40 Catalina, having forgot her hat, went back into the little vestibule to look for it. There stood the lady

and Don Antonio, exchanging a few final words (they *were* final) and a few final signs. Amongst the last Kate observed distinctly this, and distinctly she understood it. First of all, by raising her forefinger, the lady drew Calderon's attention to the act which followed as one of significant pantomime; which done, she snuffed out one of the candles. The young man answered it by a look of intelligence; and then all three passed down the steps together. The lady was disposed to take the cool air, and accompanied them 10 to the garden-gate; but, in passing down the walk, Catalina noticed a second ill-omened sign that all was not right. Two glaring eyes she distinguished amongst the shrubs for a moment, and a rustling immediately after. 'What's that?' said the lady; and Don Antonio answered carelessly, 'A bird flying out of the bushes.' But birds do not amuse themselves by staying up to midnight; and birds do not wear rapiers.

Catalina, as usual, had read everything. Not a wrinkle or a rustle was lost upon *her*. And, therefore, when 20 she reached the *locanda*, knowing to an iota all that was coming, she did not retire to bed, but paced before the house. She had not long to wait: in fifteen minutes the door opened softly, and out stepped Calderon. Kate walked forward, and faced him immediately; telling him laughingly that it was not good for his health to go abroad on this night. The young man showed some impatience; upon which, very seriously, Kate acquainted him with her suspicions, and with the certainty that the Alcalde was 30 not so blind as he had seemed. Calderon thanked her for the information; would be upon his guard; but, to prevent further expostulation, he wheeled round instantly into the darkness. Catalina was too well convinced, however, of the mischief on foot, to leave him thus. She followed rapidly, and passed silently into the garden, almost at the same time with Calderon. Both took their stations behind trees; Calderon watching nothing but the burning candles, Catalina watching circumstances to direct her movements. The candles 40 burned brightly in the little pavilion. Presently one

was extinguished. Upon this, Calderon pressed forward to the steps, hastily ascended them, and passed into the vestibule. Catalina followed on his traces. What succeeded was all one scene of continued, dreadful dumb show ; different passions of panic, or deadly struggle, or hellish malice, absolutely suffocated all articulate utterances.

In the first moments a gurgling sound was heard, as of a wild beast attempting vainly to yell over some
10 creature that it was strangling. Next came a tumbling out at the door of one black mass, which heaved and parted at intervals into two figures, which closed, which parted again, which at last fell down the steps together. Then appeared a figure in white. It was the unhappy Andalusian ; and she, seeing the outline of Catalina's person, ran up to her, unable to utter one syllable. Pitying the agony of her horror, Catalina took her within her own cloak, and carried her out at the garden gate. Calderon had by this time died ;
20 and the maniacal Alcalde had risen up to pursue his wife. But Kate, foreseeing what he would do, had stepped silently within the shadow of the garden wall. Looking down the road to the town, and seeing nobody moving, the maniac, for some purpose, went back to the house. This moment Kate used to recover the *locanda*, with the lady still panting in horror. What was to be done ? To think of concealment in this little place, was out of the question. The Alcalde was
30 a man of local power, and it was certain that he would kill his wife on the spot. Kate's generosity would not allow her to have any collusion with this murderous purpose. At Cuzco, the principal convent was ruled by a near relative of the Andalusian ; and there she would find shelter. Kate therefore saddled her horse rapidly, placed the lady behind, and rode off in the darkness.

24. A STEEPLECHASE

About five miles out of the town their road was crossed by a torrent, over which they could not hit the bridge. 'Forward !' cried the lady ; 'Oh, heavens !

forward !' and Kate repeating the word to the horse, the docile creature leaped down into the water. They were all sinking at first ; but having its head free, the horse swam clear of all obstacles through the midnight darkness, and scrambled out on the opposite bank. The two riders were dripping from the shoulders downward. But, seeing a light twinkling from a cottage window, Kate rode up ; obtaining a little refreshment, and the benefit of a fire, from a poor labouring man. From this man she also bought a warm mantle 10 for the lady, who, besides her torrent bath, was dressed in a light evening robe, so that but for the horseman's cloak of Kate she would have perished. But there was no time to lose. They had already lost two hours from the consequences of their cold bath. Cuzco was still eighteen miles distant ; and the Alcalde's shrewdness would at once divine this to be his wife's mark. They remounted : very soon the silent night echoed the hoofs of a pursuing rider ; and now commenced the most frantic race, in which each party rode as 20 if the whole game of life were staked upon the issue. The pace was killing : and Kate has delivered it as her opinion, in the memoirs which she wrote, that the Alcalde was the better mounted. This may be doubted. And certainly Kate had ridden too many years in the Spanish cavalry, to have any fear of his worship's horsemanship ; but it was a prodigious disadvantage that *her* horse had to carry double ; while the horse ridden by her opponent was one of those belonging to the murdered Don Antonio, and known to Kate as 30 a powerful animal. At length they had come within three miles of Cuzco. The road after this descended the whole way to the city, and in some places rapidly, so as to require a cool rider. Suddenly a deep trench appeared traversing the whole extent of a broad heath. It was useless to evade it. To have hesitated, was to be lost. Kate saw the necessity of clearing it ; but she doubted much whether her poor exhausted horse, after twenty-one miles of work so severe, had strength for the effort. However, the race was nearly 40 finished : a score of dreadful miles had been accom-

plished; and Kate's maxim, which never yet had failed, both figuratively for life, and literally for the saddle, was—to ride at everything that showed a front of resistance. She did so now. Having come upon the trench rather too suddenly, she wheeled round for the advantage of coming down upon it with more impetus, rode resolutely at it, cleared it, and gained the opposite bank. The hind feet of her horse were sinking back from the rottenness of the ground; but
 10 the strong supporting bridle-hand of Kate carried him forward; and in ten minutes more they would be in Cuzco. This being seen by the vengeful Alcalde, who had built great hopes on the trench, he unslung his carbine, pulled up, and fired after the bonny black horse and its two bonny riders. But this vicious manœuvre would have lost his worship any bet that he might have had depending on this admirable steeplechase. For the bullets, says Kate, in her memoirs, whistled round the poor clinging lady *en croupe*—
 20 luckily none struck *her*; but one wounded the horse. And that settled the odds. Kate now planted herself well in her stirrups to enter Cuzco, almost dangerously a winner; for the horse was so maddened by the wound, and the road so steep, that he went like blazes; and it really became difficult for Kate to guide him with any precision through narrow episcopal paths. Henceforwards the wounded horse required unintermitting attention; and yet, in the mere luxury of strife, it was impossible for Kate to avoid turning a little in
 30 her saddle to see the Alcalde's performance on this tight-rope of the trench. His worship's horsemanship being, perhaps, rather rusty, and he not perfectly acquainted with his horse, it would have been agreeable for *him* to compromise the case by riding round, or dismounting. But all *that* was impossible. The job must be done. And I am happy to report, for the reader's satisfaction, the sequel—so far as Kate could attend the performance. Gathering himself up for mischief, the Alcalde took a mighty sweep, as if plough-
 40 ing out the line of some vast encampment, or tracing the *pomoerium* for some future Rome; then, like

thunder and lightning, with arms flying aloft in the air, down he came upon the trembling trench. But the horse refused the leap; to take the leap was impossible; absolutely to refuse it, the horse felt, was immoral; and therefore, as the only compromise that his unlearned brain could suggest, he threw his worship right over his ears, lodging him safely in a sand-heap, that rose with clouds of dust and screams of birds into the morning air. Kate had now no time to send back her compliments in a musical halloo. The Alcalde 10 missed breaking his neck on this occasion very narrowly; but his neck was of no use to him in twenty minutes more, as the reader will find. Kate rode right onwards; and, coming in with a lady behind her, horse bloody, and pace such as no hounds could have lived with, she ought to have made a great sensation in Cuzco. But, unhappily, the people of Cuzco, the spectators that *should* have been, were fast asleep in bed.

The steeplechase into Cuzco had been a fine head-long thing, considering the torrent, the trench, the 20 wounded horse, the lovely Andalusian lady, with her agonizing fears, mounted behind Kate, together with the meek dove-like dawn: but the finale crowded together the quickest succession of changes that out of a melodrama ever *can* have been witnessed. Kate reached the convent in safety; carried into the cloisters, and delivered like a parcel, the fair Andalusian. But to rouse the servants, and obtain admission to the convent, caused a long delay; and on returning to the street through the broad gateway of the convent, 30 whom should she face but the Alcalde! How he had escaped the trench, who can tell? He had no time to write memoirs; his horse was too illiterate. But he *had* escaped; temper not at all improved by that adventure, and now raised to a hell of malignity by seeing that he had lost his prey. The morning light showed him how to use his sword, and whom he had before him, and he attacked Kate with fury. Both were exhausted; and Kate, besides that she had no personal quarrel with the Alcalde, having now accom- 40 plished her sole object in saving the lady, would have

been glad of a truce. She could with difficulty wield her sword; and the Alcalde had so far the advantage, that he wounded Kate severely. That roused her ancient Biscayan blood; and she turned on him now with deadly determination. At that moment in rode two servants of the Alcalde, who took part with their master. These odds strengthened Kate's resolution, but weakened her chances. Just then, however, rode in, and ranged himself on Kate's side, the servant of
10 the murdered Don Calderon. In an instant Kate had pushed her sword through the Alcalde, who died upon the spot. In an instant the servant of Calderon had fled. In an instant the *alquazils* had come up. They and the servants of the Alcalde pressed furiously on Kate, who was again fighting for her life with persons not even known to her by sight. Against such odds, she was rapidly losing ground; when, in an instant, on the opposite side of the street, the great gates of the Episcopal Palace rolled open. Thither it was
20 that Calderon's servant had fled. The Bishop and his attendants hurried across. 'Señor Caballero,' said the Bishop, 'in the name of the Virgin, I enjoin you to surrender your sword.'—'My Lord,' said Kate, 'I dare not do it with so many enemies about me.'—'But I,' replied the Bishop, 'become answerable to the law for your safe keeping.' Upon which, with filial reverence, all parties dropped their swords. Kate being severely wounded, the Bishop led her into his palace. In another instant came the catastrophe: Kate's dis-
30 covery could no longer be delayed; the blood flowed too rapidly; and the wound was in her bosom. She requested a private interview with the Bishop; all was known in a moment; surgeons and attendants were summoned hastily; and Kate had fainted. The good Bishop pitied her, and had her attended in his palace; then removed to a convent; then to a second convent at Lima; and, after many months had passed, his report of the whole extraordinary case in all its
40 details to the Supreme Government at Madrid, drew from the King, Philip IV, and from the Papal Legate, an order that the nun should be transferred to Spain.

25. ST. SEBASTIAN IS FINALLY CHECKMATED

Yes, at length the warrior lady, the blooming Cornet—this nun that is so martial, this dragoon that is so lovely—must visit again the home of her childhood, which now for seventeen years she has not seen. All Spain, Portugal, Italy, rang with her adventures. Spain, from north to south, was frantic with desire to behold her fiery child, whose girlish romance, whose patriotic heroism, electrified the national imagination. The King of Spain must kiss his *faithful* daughter, 10 that would not suffer his banner to see dishonour. The Pope must kiss his *wandering* daughter, that henceforwards will be a lamb travelling back into the Christian fold. Potentates so great as these, when *they* speak words of love, do not speak in vain. All was forgiven; the sacrilege, the bloodshed, the flight and the scorn of St. Sebastian's (consequently of St. Peter's) keys; the pardons were made out, were signed, were sealed; and the chanceries of earth were satisfied.

20

Ah! what a day of sorrow and of joy was *that* one day, in the first week of November, 1624, when the returning Kate drew near to the shore of Andalusia; when, descending into the ship's barge, she was rowed to the piers of Cadiz by bargemen in the royal liveries; when she saw every ship, street, house, convent, church, crowded, as if on some mighty day of judgment, with human faces, with men, with women, with children, all bending the lights of their flashing eyes upon herself! Forty myriads of people had gathered 30 in Cadiz alone. All Andalusia had turned out to receive her. Ah! what joy for *her*, if she had not looked back to the Andes, to their dreadful summits, and their more dreadful feet. Ah! what sorrow, if she had not been forced by music, and endless banners, and the triumphant jubilations of her countrymen, to turn away from the Andes, and to fix her thoughts for the moment upon that glad tumultuous shore which she approached.

Upon this shore stood, ready to receive her, in front 40

of all this mighty crowd, the Prime Minister of Spain, that same Conde Olivarez, who but one year before had been so haughty and so defying to our haughty and defying Duke of Buckingham. But a year ago the Prince of Wales had been in Spain, seeking a Spanish bride, and he also was welcomed with triumph and great joy ; but not with the hundredth part of that enthusiasm which now met the returning nun. And Olivarez, that had spoken so roughly to the English Duke, to *her* was 'sweet as summer'. Through endless crowds of welcoming compatriots he conducted her to the King. The King folded her in his arms, and could never be satisfied with listening to her. He sent for her continually to his presence ; he delighted in her conversation, so new, so natural, so spirited ; he settled a pension upon her (at that time, of unprecedented amount) ; and by *his* desire, because the year 1625 was a year of jubilee, she departed in a few months from Madrid to Rome. She went through Barcelona ; there and everywhere welcomed as the lady whom the King delighted to honour. She travelled to Rome, and all doors flew open to receive her. She was presented to his Holiness, with letters from his Most Catholic Majesty. But letters there needed none. The Pope admired her as much as all before had done. He caused her to recite all her adventures ; and what he loved most in her account, was the sincere and sorrowing spirit in which she described herself as neither better nor worse than she had been. Neither proud was Kate, nor sycophantishly and falsely humble. Urban VIII it was that then filled the chair of St. Peter. He did not neglect to raise his daughter's thoughts from earthly things : he pointed her eyes to the clouds that were floating in mighty volumes above the dome of St. Peter's Cathedral ; he told her what the cathedral had told her amongst the gorgeous clouds of the Andes and the solemn vesper lights—how sweet a thing, how divine a thing it was for Christ's sake to forgive all injuries ; and how he trusted that no more she would think of bloodshed ; but that, if again she should suffer wrongs, she would resign all vindictive

retaliation for them into the hands of God, the final Avenger. I must also find time to mention, although the press and the compositors are in a fury at my delays, that the Pope, in his farewell audience to his dear daughter, whom he was to see no more, gave her a general licence to wear henceforth in all countries—even in *partibus infidelium*—a cavalry officer's dress—boots, spurs, sabre; in fact, anything that she and the Horse Guards might agree upon. Consequently, reader, say not one word, nor suffer any tailor to say 10 one word, or the ninth part of a word, against those Wellington trousers made in the chestnut forest; for, understand that the papal indulgence as to this point runs backwards as well as forwards; it sanctions equally those trousers in the forgotten rear, and all possible trousers yet to come.

From Rome, Kate returned to Spain. She even went to St. Sebastian's—to the city, but—whether it was that her heart failed her or not—never to the convent. She roamed up and down; everywhere she 20 was welcome—everywhere an honoured guest; but everywhere restless. The poor and humble never ceased from their admiration of her; and amongst the rich and aristocratic of Spain, with the King at their head, Kate found especial love from two classes of men. The Cardinals and Bishops all doted upon her—as their daughter that was returning. The military men all doted upon her—as their sister that was retiring.

26. FAREWELL TO THE DAUGHTER OF ST. SEBASTIAN! 30

Now, at this moment, it has become necessary for me to close, but I allow to the reader one question before laying down my pen. Come now, reader, be quick; 'look sharp'; and ask what you *have* to ask; for in one minute and a half I am going to write in capitals the word FINIS; after which, you know, I am not at liberty to add a syllable. It would be shameful to do so; since that word *Finis* enters into a secret covenant with the reader that he shall be

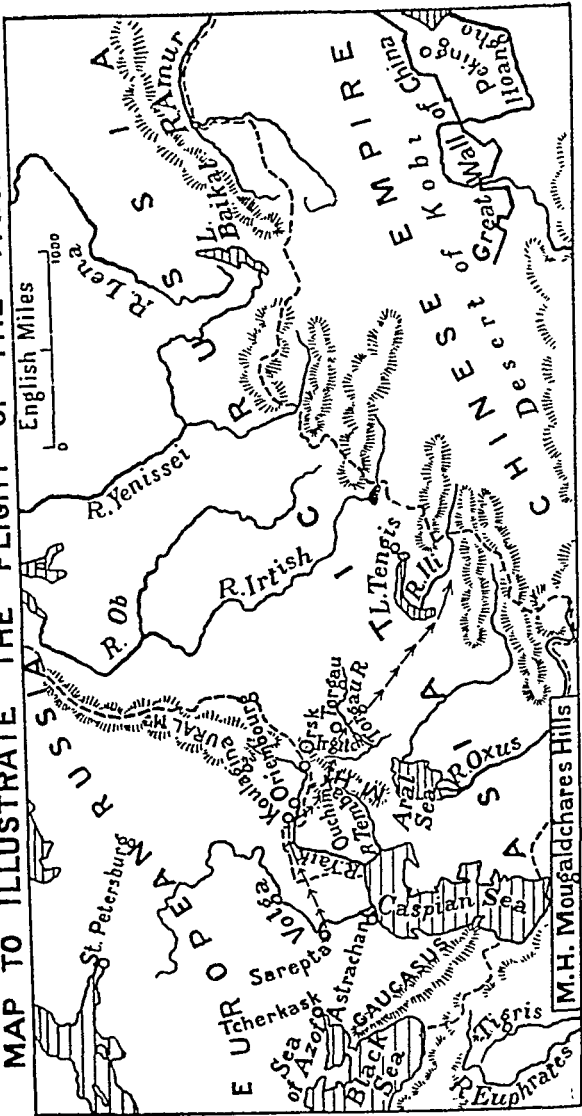
molested no more with words small or great. Twenty to one, I guess what your question will be. You desire to ask me, What became of Kate? What was her end?

Ah, reader! but, if I answer that question, you will say I have *not* answered it. If I tell you that secret, you will say that the secret is still hidden. Yet, because I have promised, and because you will be angry if I do not, let me do my best. After ten
10 years of restlessness in Spain, with thoughts always turning back to the dreadful Andes, Kate heard of an expedition on the point of sailing to Spanish America. All soldiers knew *her*, so that she had information of everything which stirred in camps. Men of the highest military rank were going out with the expedition; but Kate was a sister everywhere privileged; she was as much cherished and as sacred, in the eyes of every brigade or *tertia*, as their own regimental colours; and every member of the Staff, from the highest to
20 the lowest, rejoiced to hear that she would join their mess on board ship. This ship, with others, sailed; whither finally bound, I really forget. But, on reaching America, all the expedition touched at Vera Cruz. Thither a great crowd of the military went on shore. The leading officers made a separate party for the same purpose. Their intention was, to have a gay, happy dinner, after their long confinement to a ship, at the chief hotel; and happy in perfection the dinner could not be, unless Kate would consent to "join it."
30 She, that was ever kind to brother soldiers, agreed to do so. She descended into the boat along with them, and in twenty minutes the boat touched the shore. All the bevy of gay laughing officers, junior and senior, like so many schoolboys let loose from school, jumped on shore, and walked hastily, as their time was limited, up to the hotel. Arriving there, all turned round in eagerness, saying, 'Where is our dear Kate?' Ah, yes, my dear Kate, at that solemn moment, where, indeed, were *you*? She had, beyond all doubt, taken
40 her seat in the boat: that was certain, though nobody, in the general confusion, was certain of having seen

her actually step ashore. The sea was searched for her—the forests were ransacked. But the sea did not give up its dead, if *there* indeed she lay; and the forests made no answer to the sorrowing hearts which sought her amongst *them*. Have I never formed a conjecture of my own upon the mysterious fate which thus suddenly enveloped her, and hid her in darkness for ever? Yes, I have. But it is a conjecture too dim and unsteady to be worth repeating. Her brother soldiers, that should naturally have had more materials for ¹⁰ guessing than myself, were all lost in sorrowing perplexity, and could never arrive even at a plausible conjecture.

That happened two hundred and twenty-one years ago! And here is the brief upshot of all:—This nun sailed from Spain to Peru, and she found no rest for the sole of her foot. This nun sailed back from Peru to Spain, and she found no rest for the agitations of her heart. This nun sailed again from Spain to America, and she found—the rest which all of us find. ²⁰ But where it was, could never be made known to the father of Spanish camps, that sat in Madrid; nor to Kate's spiritual father, that sat in Rome. Known it is to the great Father of all, that once whispered to Kate on the Andes; but else it has been a secret for more than two centuries; and to man it remains a secret for ever and ever!

MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE FLIGHT OF THE TARTARS



REVOLT OF THE TARTARS;

OR, FLIGHT OF THE KALMUCK KHAN AND HIS PEOPLE FROM THE RUSSIAN TERRI- TORIES TO THE FRONTIERS OF CHINA

THERE is no great event in modern history, or, perhaps it may be said more broadly, none in all history, from its earliest records, less generally known, or more striking to the imagination, than the flight eastwards of a principal Tartar nation across the boundless steppes of Asia in the latter half of the last century. The *terminus a quo* of this flight, and the *terminus ad quem*, are equally magnificent; the mightiest of Christian thrones being the one, the mightiest of Pagan the other. And the grandeur of these two ¹⁰ terminal objects is harmoniously supported by the romantic circumstances of the flight. In the abruptness of its commencement, and the fierce velocity of its execution, we read the wild barbaric character of those who conducted the movement. In the unity of purpose connecting this myriad of wills, and in the blind but unerring aim at a mark so remote, there is something which recalls to the mind those almighty instincts that propel the migrations of the swallow and the lemming, or the life-withering marches of the ²⁰ locust. Then again, in the gloomy vengeance of Russia and her vast artillery, which hung upon the rear and the skirts of the fugitive vassals, we are reminded of Miltonic images—such, for instance, as that of the solitary hand pursuing through desert spaces and through ancient chaos a rebellious host, and overtaking with volleying thunders those who believed themselves already within the security of darkness and of distance.

I shall have occasion, farther on, to compare this event with other great national catastrophes as to the magnitude of the suffering. But it may also challenge a comparison with similar events under another relation, viz., as to its dramatic capabilities. Few cases, perhaps, in romance or history, can sustain a close collation with this, as to the *complexity* of its separate interests. The great outline of the enterprise, taken in connexion with the operative motives, hidden or
10 avowed, and the religious sanctions under which it was pursued, give to the case a triple character: First, that of a *conspiracy*, with as close a unity in the incidents, and as much of a personal interest in the moving characters, with fine dramatic contrasts, as belongs to *Venice Preserved*, or to the *Fiesco* of Schiller. Secondly, that of a great *military expedition*, offering the same romantic features of vast distances to be traversed, vast reverses to be sustained, untried routes, enemies obscurely ascertained, and hardships too
20 vaguely prefigured, which mark the Egyptian expedition of Cambyses—which mark the anabasis of the younger Cyrus, and the subsequent retreat of the Ten Thousand—which mark the Parthian expeditions of the Romans, especially those of Crassus and Julian—or (as more disastrous than any of them, and, in point of space as well as in amount of forces, more extensive) the Russian anabasis and katabasis of Napoleon. Thirdly, that of a religious exodus, authorized by an oracle venerated throughout many nations of Asia, an
30 exodus, therefore, in so far resembling the great Scriptural exodus of the Israelites, under Moses and Joshua, as well as in the very peculiar distinction of carrying along with them their entire families, women, children, slaves, their herds of cattle and of sheep, their horses and their camels.

This triple character of the enterprise naturally invests it with a more comprehensive interest. But the dramatic interest which I have ascribed to it, or its fitness for a stage representation, depends partly
40 upon the marked variety and the strength of the personal agencies concerned, and partly upon the suc-

cession of scenical situations. Even the steppes, the camels, the tents, the snowy and the sandy deserts, are not beyond the scale of our modern representative powers, as often called into action in the theatres both of Paris and London; and the series of situations unfolded, beginning with the general conflagration on the Wolga—passing thence to the disastrous scenes of the flight (as it *literally* was in its commencement)—to the Tartar siege of the Russian fortress Koulagina—the bloody engagement with the Cossacks in the 10 mountain passes at Ouchim—the surprisal by the Bashkirs, and the advanced posts of the Russian army at Torgau—the private conspiracy at this point against the Khan—the long succession of running fights—the parting massacres at the Lake of Tengis under the eyes of the Chinese—and finally, the tragical retribution to Zebek-Dorchu at the hunting lodge of the Chinese emperor;—all these situations communicate a *scenical* animation to the wild romance, if treated dramatically; whilst a higher and a philosophic interest belongs to 20 it as a case of authentic history, commemorating a great revolution for good and for evil, in the fortunes of a whole people—a people semi-barbarous, but simple-hearted, and of ancient descent.

On the 21st of January, 1761, the young Prince Oubacha assumed the sceptre of the Kalmucks upon the death of his father. Some part of the power attached to this dignity he had already wielded since his fourteenth year, in quality of Vice-Khan, by the express appointment and with the avowed support of the Russian 30 Government. He was now about eighteen years of age, amiable in his personal character, and not without titles to respect in his public character as a sovereign prince. In times more peaceable, and amongst a people more entirely civilized, or more humanized by religion, it is even probable that he might have discharged his high duties with considerable distinction. But his lot was thrown upon stormy times, and a most difficult crisis amongst tribes, whose native ferocity was exasperated by debasing forms of super- 40 stition, and by a nationality as well as an inflated

conceit of their own merit absolutely unparalleled, whilst the circumstances of their hard and trying position under the jealous surveillance of an irresistible lord paramount, in the person of the Russian Czar, gave a fiercer edge to the natural unamiableness of the Kalmuck disposition, and irritated its gloomier qualities into action under the restless impulses of suspicion and permanent distrust. No prince could hope for a cordial allegiance from his subjects, or a
10 peaceful reign under the circumstances of the case ; for the dilemma in which a Kalmuck ruler stood at present was of this nature : *wanting* the sanction and support of the Czar, he was inevitably too weak from without to command confidence from his subjects, or resistance to his competitors ; on the other hand, *with* this kind of support, and deriving his title in any degree from the favour of the Imperial Court, he became almost in that extent an object of hatred at home, and within the whole compass of his own
20 territory. He was at once an object of hatred for the past, being a living monument of national independence, ignominiously surrendered, and an object of jealousy for the future, as one who had already advertised himself to be a fitting tool for the ultimate purposes (whatsoever those might prove to be) of the Russian Court. Coming himself to the Kalmuck sceptre under the heaviest weight of prejudice from the unfortunate circumstances of his position, it might have been expected that Oubacha would have been
30 pre-eminently an object of detestation ; for, besides his known dependence upon the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, the direct line of succession had been set aside, and the principle of inheritance violently suspended, in favour of his own father, so recently as nineteen years before the era of his own accession, consequently within the lively remembrance of the existing generation. He therefore, almost equally with his father, stood within the full current of the national prejudices, and might have anticipated the most pointed
40 hostility. But it was not so : such are the caprices in human affairs, that he was even, in a moderate sense,

popular—a benefit which wore the more cheering aspect, and the promises of permanence, inasmuch as he owed it exclusively to his personal qualities of kindness and affability, as well as to the beneficence of his government. On the other hand, to balance this unlooked-for prosperity at the outset of his reign, he met with a rival in popular favour—almost a competitor—in the person of Zebek-Dorchi, a prince with considerable pretensions to the throne, and perhaps, it might be said, with equal pretensions. Zebek-Dorchi 10 was a direct descendant of the same royal house as himself, through a different branch. On public grounds, his claim stood, perhaps, on a footing equally good with that of Oubacha, whilst his personal qualities, even in those aspects which seemed to a philosophical observer most odious and repulsive, promised the most effectual aid to the dark purposes of an intriguer or a conspirator, and were generally fitted to win a popular support precisely in those points where Oubacha was most defective. He was much superior 20 in external appearance to his rival on the throne, and so far better qualified to win the good opinion of a semi-barbarous people; whilst his dark intellectual qualities of Machiavelian dissimulation, profound hypocrisy, and perfidy which knew no touch of remorse, were admirably calculated to sustain any ground which he might win from the simple-hearted people with whom he had to deal—and from the frank carelessness of his unconscious competitor.

At the very outset of his treacherous career, Zebek- 30 Dorchi was sagacious enough to perceive that nothing could be gained by open declaration of hostility to the reigning prince: the choice had been a deliberate act on the part of Russia, and Elizabeth Petrowna was not the person to recall her own favours with levity, or upon slight grounds. Openly, therefore, to have declared his enmity towards his relative on the throne, could have had no effect but that of arming suspicions against his own ulterior purposes in a quarter where it was most essential to his interest that, for the 40 present, all suspicion should be hoodwinked. Ac-

cordingly, after much meditation, the course he took for opening his snares was this :—He raised a rumour that his own life was in danger from the plots of several Saissang (that is, Kalmuck nobles), who were leagued together, under an oath, to assassinate him ; and immediately after, assuming a well-counterfeited alarm. he fled to Tcherkask, followed by sixty-five tents. From this place he kept up a correspondence with the Imperial Court ; and, by way of soliciting his
10 cause more effectually, he soon repaired in person to St. Petersburg. Once admitted to personal conferences with the Cabinet, he found no difficulty in winning over the Russian counsels to a concurrence with some of his political views, and thus covertly introducing the point of that wedge which was finally to accomplish his purposes. In particular, he persuaded the Russian Government to make a very important alteration in the constitution of the Kalmuck State Council, which in effect reorganized the whole political
20 condition of the state, and disturbed the balance of power as previously adjusted. Of this Council—in the Kalmuck language called Sarga—there were eight members, called Sargatchi ; and hitherto it had been the custom that these eight members should be entirely subordinate to the Khan ; holding, in fact, the ministerial character of secretaries and assistants, but in no respect acting as co-ordinate authorities. That had produced some inconveniences in former reigns ; and it was easy for Zebek-Dorchi to point the jealousy of
30 the Russian Court to others more serious, which might arise in future circumstances of war or other contingencies. It was resolved, therefore, to place the Sargatchi henceforwards on a footing of perfect independence, and therefore (as regarded responsibility) on a footing of equality with the Khan. Their independence, however, had respect only to their own sovereign ; for towards Russia they were placed in a new attitude of direct duty and accountability, by the creation in their favour of small pensions (300
40 roubles a year), which, however, to a Kalmuck of that day were more considerable than might be supposed,

and had a further value as marks of honorary distinction emanating from a great empress. Thus far the purposes of Zebek-Dorchî were served effectually for the moment: but, apparently, it was only for the moment; since, in the further development of his plots, this very dependency upon Russian influence would be the most serious obstacle in his way. There was, however, another point carried which outweighed all inferior considerations, as it gave him a power of setting aside discretionally whatsoever should arise to disturb his plots: he was himself appointed President and Controller of the Sargatchi. The Russian Court had been aware of his high pretensions by birth, and hoped by this promotion to satisfy the ambition which, in some degree, was acknowledged to be a reasonable passion for any man occupying his situation.

Having thus completely blindfolded the Cabinet of Russia, Zebek-Dorchî proceeded in his new character to fulfil his political mission with the Khan of the Kalmucks. So artfully did he prepare the road for his favourable reception at the court of this prince, that he was at once and universally welcomed as a benefactor. The pensions of the counsellors were so much additional wealth poured into the Tartar exchequer; as to the ties of dependency thus created, experience had not yet enlightened these simple tribes as to that result. And that he himself should be the chief of these mercenary counsellors, was so far from being charged upon Zebek as any offence or any ground of suspicion, that his relative the Khan returned him hearty thanks for his services, under the belief that he could have accepted this appointment only with a view to keep out other and more unwelcome pretenders, who would not have had the same motives of consanguinity or friendship for executing its duties in a spirit of kindness to the Kalmucks. The first use which he made of his new functions about the Khan's person, was to attack the Court of Russia by a romantic villainy not easy to be credited, for those very acts of interference with the Council which he himself had prompted. This was a dangerous step:

but it was indispensable to his further advance upon the gloomy path which he had traced out for himself. A triple vengeance was what he meditated:—(1) upon the Russian Cabinet for having undervalued his own pretensions to the throne; (2) upon his amiable rival, for having supplanted him; and (3) upon all those of the nobility who had manifested their sense of his weakness by their neglect, or their sense of his perfidious character by their suspicions. Here was a colossal outline of wickedness; and by one in his situation, feeble (as it might seem) for the accomplishment of its humblest parts, how was the total edifice to be reared in its comprehensive grandeur? He, a worm as he was, could he venture to assail the mighty behemoth of Muscovy, the potentate who counted three hundred languages around the footsteps of his throne, and from whose 'lion ramp' recoiled alike 'baptized and infidel'—Christendom on the one side, strong by her intellect and her organization, and the 'barbaric East' on the other, with her unnumbered numbers? The match was a monstrous one; but in its very monstrosity there lay this germ of encouragement, that it could not be suspected. The very hopelessness of the scheme grounded his hope, and he resolved to execute a vengeance which should involve, as it were, in the unity of a well-laid tragic fable, all whom he judged to be his enemies. That vengeance lay in detaching from the Russian empire the whole Kalmuck nation, and breaking up that system of intercourse which had thus far been beneficial to both. This last was a consideration which moved him but little. True it was, that Russia to the Kalmucks had secured lands and extensive pasturage; true it was, that the Kalmucks reciprocally to Russia had furnished a powerful cavalry. But the latter loss would be part of his triumph, and the former might be more than compensated in other climates under other sovereigns. Here was a scheme which, in its final accomplishment, would avenge him bitterly on the Czarina, and in the course of its accomplishment might furnish him with ample occasions for removing

his other enemies. It may be readily supposed, indeed, that he who could deliberately raise his eyes to the Russian autocrat as an antagonist in single duel with himself, was not likely to feel much anxiety about Kalmuck enemies of whatever rank. He took his resolution, therefore, sternly and irrevocably to effect this astonishing translation of an ancient people across the pathless deserts of Central Asia, intersected continually by rapid rivers, rarely furnished with bridges, and of which the fords were known only to those who 10 might think it for their interest to conceal them, through many nations inhospitable or hostile; frost and snow around them (from the necessity of commencing their flight in winter), famine in their front, and the sabre, or even the artillery of an offended and mighty empress, hanging upon their rear for thousands of miles. But what was to be their final mark—the port of shelter after so fearful a course of wandering? Two things were evident: it must be some power at a great distance from Russia, so as to make return 20 even in that view hopeless; and it must be a power of sufficient rank to ensure them protection from any hostile efforts on the part of the Czarina for reclaiming them, or for chastising their revolt. Both conditions were united obviously in the person of Kien Long, the reigning Emperor of China, who was farther recommended to them by his respect for the head of their religion. To China, therefore, and, as their first rendezvous, to the shadow of the great Chinese Wall, it was settled by Zebek that they should direct their 30 flight.

Next came the question of time—*when* should the flight commence? and finally, the more delicate question as to the choice of accomplices. To extend the knowledge of the conspiracy too far, was to ensure its betrayal to the Russian Government. Yet, at some stage of the preparations, it was evident that a very extensive confidence must be made, because in no other way could the mass of the Kalmuck population be persuaded to furnish their families with the requisite 40 equipments for so long a migration. This critical step,

however, it was resolved to defer up to the latest possible moment, and, at all events, to make no general communication on the subject until the time of departure should be definitely settled. In the meantime, Zebek admitted only three persons to his confidence; of whom Oubacha, the reigning prince, was almost necessarily one; but him, from his yielding and somewhat feeble character, he viewed rather in the light of a tool, than as one of his active accomplices. Those
10 whom (if anybody) he admitted to an unreserved participation in his counsels, were two only, the great Lama among the Kalmucks, and his own father-in-law, Erempel, a ruling prince of some tribe in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea, recommended to his favour, not so much by any strength of talent corresponding to the occasion, as by his blind devotion to himself, and his passionate anxiety to promote the elevation of his daughter and his son-in-law to the throne of a sovereign prince. A titular prince Zebek
20 already was: but this dignity, without the substantial accompaniment of a sceptre, seemed but an empty sound to both of these ambitious rebels. The other accomplice, whose name was Loosan-Dchaltzan, and whose rank was that of Lama, or Kalmuck pontiff, was a person of far more distinguished pretensions; he had something of the same gloomy and terrific pride which marked the character of Zebek himself, manifesting also the same energy, accompanied by the same unfaltering cruelty, and a natural facility of dis-
30 simulation even more profound. It was by this man that the other question was settled, as to the time for giving effect to their designs. His own pontifical character had suggested to him, that, in order to strengthen their influence with the vast mob of simple-minded men whom they were to lead into a howling wilderness, after persuading them to lay desolate their own ancient hearths, it was indispensable that they should be able, in cases of extremity, to plead the express sanction of God for their entire enterprise. This
40 could only be done by addressing themselves to the great head of their religion, the Dalai-Lama of Tibet.

Him they easily persuaded to countenance their schemes: and an oracle was delivered solemnly at Tibet, to the effect that no ultimate prosperity would attend this great exodus unless it were pursued through the Years of the Tiger and the Hare. Now, the Kal-muck custom is to distinguish their years by attaching to each a denomination taken from one of twelve animals, the exact order of succession being absolutely fixed, so that the cycle revolves of course through a period of a dozen years. Consequently, if the 10 approaching Year of the Tiger were suffered to escape them, in that case the expedition must be delayed for twelve years more, within which period, even were no other unfavourable changes to arise, it was pretty well foreseen that the Russian Government would take the most effectual means for bridling their vagrant propensities by a ring fence of forts or military posts; to say nothing of the still readier plan for securing their fidelity (a plan already talked of in all quarters), by exacting a large body of hostages selected 20 from the families of the most influential nobles. On these cogent considerations, it was solemnly determined that this terrific experiment should be made in the next Year of the Tiger, which happened to fall upon the Christian year 1771. With respect to the month, there was, unhappily for the Kalmucks, even less latitude allowed to their choice than with respect to the year. It was absolutely necessary, or it was thought so, that the different divisions of the nation which pastured their flocks on both banks of the 30 Wolga, should have the means of effecting an instantaneous junction; because the danger of being intercepted by flying columns of the imperial armies was precisely the greatest at the outset. Now, from the want of bridges, or sufficient river craft for transporting so vast a body of men, the sole means which could be depended upon (especially where so many women, children, and camels were concerned), was ice: and this, in a state of sufficient firmness, could not be absolutely counted upon before the month 40 of January. Hence it happened that this astonishing

exodus of a whole nation, before so much as a whisper of the design had begun to circulate amongst those whom it most interested, before it was even suspected that any man's wishes pointed in that direction, had been definitively appointed for January of the year 1771. And almost up to the Christmas of 1770, the poor simple Kalmuck herdsmen and their families were going nightly to their peaceful beds, without even dreaming that the fiat had already gone forth from their rulers which consigned those quiet abodes, together with the peace and comfort which reigned within them, to a withering desolation, now close at hand.

Meantime war raged on a great scale between Russia and the Sultan; and, until the time arrived for throwing off their vassalage, it was necessary that Oubacha should contribute his usual contingent of martial aid. Nay, it had unfortunately become prudent that he should contribute much more than his usual aid.

Human experience gives ample evidence, that in some mysterious and unaccountable way no great design is ever agitated, no matter how few or how faithful may be the participators, but that some presentiment—some dim misgiving—is kindled amongst those whom it is chiefly important to blind. And, however it might have happened, certain it is, that already, when as yet no syllable of the conspiracy had been breathed to any man whose very existence was not staked upon its concealment, nevertheless, some vague and uneasy jealousy had arisen in the Russian Cabinet as to the future schemes of the Kalmuck Khan: and very probable it is, that, but for the war then raging, and the consequent prudence of conciliating a very important vassal, or, at least, of abstaining from what would powerfully alienate him, even at that moment such measures would have been adopted as must for ever have intercepted the Kalmuck schemes. Slight as were the jealousies of the Imperial Court, they had not escaped the Machiavelian eyes of Zebek and the Lama. And under their guidance, Oubacha, bending to the circumstances of the moment, and meeting the

jealousy of the Russian Court with a policy corresponding to their own, strove by unusual zeal to efface the Czarina's unfavourable impressions. He enlarged the scale of his contributions, and *that* so prodigiously, that he absolutely carried to head-quarters a force of 35,000 cavalry fully equipped; some go further, and rate the amount beyond 40,000; but the smaller estimate is, at all events, *within* the truth.

With this magnificent array of cavalry, heavy as well as light, the Khan went into the field under 10 great expectations; and these he more than realized. Having the good fortune to be concerned with so ill-organized and disorderly a description of force as that which at all times composed the bulk of a Turkish army, he carried victory along with his banners; gained many partial successes; and at last, in a pitched battle, overthrew the Turkish force opposed to him with a loss of 5,000 men left upon the field.

These splendid achievements seemed likely to operate in various ways against the impending revolt. 20 Oubacha had now a strong motive, in the martial glory acquired, for continuing his connexion with the empire in whose service he had won it, and by whom only it could be fully appreciated. He was now a great marshal of a great empire, one of the paladins around the imperial throne; in China he would be nobody, or (worse than that) a mendicant alien, prostrate at the feet, and soliciting the precarious alms, of a prince with whom he had no connexion. Besides, it might reasonably be expected that the Czarina, 30 grateful for the really efficient aid given by the Tartar prince, would confer upon him such eminent rewards as might be sufficient to anchor his hopes upon Russia, and to wean him from every possible seduction. These were the obvious suggestions of prudence and good sense to every man who stood neutral in the case. But they were disappointed. The Czarina knew her obligations to the Khan, but she did not acknowledge them. Wherefore? That is a mystery, perhaps never to be explained. So it was, however. The Khan 40 went unhonoured; no *ukase* ever proclaimed his merits;

and perhaps, had he even been abundantly recompensed by Russia, there were others who would have defeated these tendencies to reconciliation. Erempel, Zebek, and Loosan the Lama, were pledged life-deep to prevent any accommodation; and their efforts were unfortunately seconded by those of their deadliest enemies. In the Russian Court there were at that time some great nobles preoccupied with feelings of hatred and blind malice towards the Kalmucks, quite as strong
10 as any which the Kalmucks could harbour towards Russia, and not, perhaps, so well founded. Just as much as the Kalmucks hated the Russian yoke, their galling assumption of authority, the marked air of disdain, as towards a nation of ugly, stupid, and filthy barbarians, which too generally marked the Russian bearing and language; but, above all, the insolent contempt, or even outrages, which the Russian governors or great military commandants tolerated in their followers towards the barbarous religion and super-
20 stitious mummeries of the Kalmuck priesthood—precisely in that extent did the ferocity of the Russian resentment, and their wrath at seeing the trampled worm turn or attempt a feeble retaliation, react upon the unfortunate Kalmucks. At this crisis, it is probable that envy and wounded pride, upon witnessing the splendid victories of Oubacha and Momotbacha over the Turks and Bashkirs, contributed strength to the Russian irritation. And it must have been through the intrigues of those nobles about her person, who
30 chiefly smarted under these feelings, that the Czarina could ever have lent herself to the unwise and ungrateful policy pursued at this critical period towards the Kalmuck Khan. That Czarina was no longer Elizabeth Petrowna, it was Catherine II—a princess who did not often err so injuriously (injuriously for herself as much as for others) in the measures of her government. She had soon ample reason for repenting of her false policy. Meantime, how much it must have co-operated with the other motives previously act-
40 ing upon Oubacha in sustaining his determination to revolt; and how powerfully it must have assisted the

efforts of all the Tartar chieftains in preparing the minds of their people to feel the necessity of this difficult enterprise, by arming their pride and their suspicions against the Russian Government, through the keenness of their sympathy with the wrongs of their insulted prince, may be readily imagined. It is a fact, and it has been confessed by candid Russians themselves, when treating of this great dismemberment, that the conduct of the Russian Cabinet throughout the period of suspense and during the crisis of 10 hesitation in the Kalmuck Council, was exactly such as was most desirable for the purposes of the conspirators; it was such, in fact, as to set the seal to all their machinations, by supplying distinct evidences and official vouchers for what could otherwise have been, at the most, matters of doubtful suspicion and indirect presumption.

Nevertheless, in the face of all these arguments, and even allowing their weight so far as not at all to deny the injustice or the impolicy of the Imperial ministers, 20 it is contended by many persons who have reviewed the affair with a command of all the documents bearing on the case, more especially the letters or minutes of Council subsequently discovered in the handwriting of Zebek-Dorchi, and the important evidence of the Russian captive Weseloff, who was carried off by the Kalmucks in their flight, that beyond all doubt Oubacha was powerless for any purpose of impeding or even of delaying the revolt. He himself, indeed, was under religious obligations of the most terrific 30 solemnity never to flinch from the enterprise, or even to slacken in his zeal: for Zebek-Dorchi, distrusting the firmness of his resolution under any unusual pressure of alarm or difficulty, had, in the very earliest stage of the conspiracy, availed himself of the Khan's well-known superstition to engage him, by means of previous concert with the priests and their head the Lama, in some dark and mysterious rites of consecration, terminating in oaths under such terrific sanctions as no Kalmuck would have courage to violate. As 40 far, therefore, as regarded the personal share of the

Khan in what was to come, Zebek was entirely at his ease ; he knew him to be so deeply pledged by religious terrors to the prosecution of the conspiracy, that no honours within the Czarina's gift could have possibly shaken his adhesion : and then, as to threats from the same quarter, he knew him to be sealed against those fears by others of a gloomier character, and better adapted to his peculiar temperament. For Oubacha was a brave man as respected all bodily
10 enemies or the dangers of human warfare, but was as sensitive and as timid as the most superstitious of old women in facing the frowns of a priest, or under the vague anticipations of ghostly retributions. But, had it been otherwise, and had there been any reason to apprehend an unsteady demeanour on the part of this prince at the approach of the critical moment, such were the changes already effected in the state of their domestic politics amongst the Tartars, by the undermining arts of Zebek-Dorchí and his ally
20 the Lama, that very little importance would have attached to that doubt. All power was now effectually lodged in the hands of Zebek-Dorchí. He was the true and absolute wielder of the Kalmuck sceptre ; all measures of importance were submitted to his discretion ; and nothing was finally resolved but under his dictation. This result he had brought about, in a year or two, by means sufficiently simple ; first of all, by availing himself of the prejudice in his favour, so largely diffused amongst the lowest of the Kalmucks,
30 that his own title to the throne, in quality of great-grandson in a direct line from Ajouka, the most illustrious of all the Kalmuck Khans, stood upon a better basis than that of Oubacha, who derived from a collateral branch ; secondly, with respect to that sole advantage which Oubacha possessed above himself in the ratification of his title, by improving this difference between their situations to the disadvantage of his competitor, as one who had not scrupled to accept that triumph from an alien power at the price
40 of his independence, which he himself (as he would have it understood) disdained to court ; thirdly, by

his own talents and address, coupled with the ferocious energy of his moral character ; fourthly—and perhaps in an equal degree—by the criminal facility and good-nature of Oubacha ; finally (which is remarkable enough, as illustrating the character of the man), by that very new modelling of the Sarga or Privy Council which he had used as a principal topic of abuse and malicious insinuation against the Russian Government, whilst, in reality, he first had suggested the alteration to the Empress, and he chiefly appropriated the political ad- 10
vantages which it was fitted to yield. For, as he was himself appointed the chief of the Sargatchi, and as the pensions to the inferior Sargatchi passed through his hands, whilst in effect they owed their appointments to his nomination, it may be easily supposed, that whatever power existed in the state capable of controlling the Khan, being held by the Sarga under its new organization, and this body being completely under his influence, the final result was to throw all the functions of the state, whether nominally in the 20
Prince or in the Council, substantially into the hands of this one man ; whilst, at the same time, from the strict league which he maintained with the Lama, all the thunders of the spiritual power were always ready to come in aid of the magistrate, or to supply his incapacity in cases which he could not reach.

But the time was now rapidly approaching for the mighty experiment. The day was drawing near on which the signal was to be given for raising the standard of revolt, and by a combined movement on 30
both sides of the Wolga for spreading the smoke of one vast conflagration, that should wrap in a common blaze their own huts and the stately cities of their enemies, over the breadth and length of those great provinces in which their flocks were dispersed. The Year of the Tiger was now within one little month of its commencement ; the fifth morning of that year was fixed for the fatal day when the fortunes and happiness of a whole nation were to be put upon the hazard of a dicer's throw ; and as yet that nation was 40
in profound ignorance of the whole plan. The Khan,

such was the kindness of his nature, could not bring himself to make the revelation so urgently required. It was clear, however, that this could not be delayed; and Zebek-Dorchi took the task willingly upon himself. But where or how should this notification be made, so as to exclude Russian hearers? After some deliberation, the following plan was adopted:—Couriers, it was contrived, should arrive in furious haste, one upon the heels of another, reporting a sudden inroad
10 of the Kirghises and Bashkirs upon the Kalmuck lands, at a point distant about 120 miles. Thither all the Kalmuck families, according to immemorial custom, were required to send a separate representative; and there accordingly, within three days, all appeared. The distance, the solitary ground appointed for the rendezvous, the rapidity of the march, all tended to make it almost certain that no Russian could be present. Zebek-Dorchi then came forward. He did not waste many words upon rhetoric. He
20 unfurled an immense sheet of parchment, visible from the uttermost distance at which any of this vast crowd could stand; the total number amounted to 80,000; all saw, and many heard. They were told of the oppressions of Russia; of her pride and haughty disdain evidenced towards them by a thousand acts; of her contempt for their religion; of her determination to reduce them to absolute slavery; of the preliminary measures she had already taken by erecting
30 forts upon many of the great rivers in their neighbourhood; of the ulterior intentions she thus announced to circumscribe their pastoral lands, until they would all be obliged to renounce their flocks, and to collect in towns like Sarepta, there to pursue mechanical and servile trades of shoemaker, tailor, and weaver, such as the free-born Tartar had always disdained. ‘Then again,’ said the subtle prince, ‘she increases her military levies upon our population every year; we pour out our blood as young men in her
40 aggressions; and as old men, we reap nothing from our sufferings, nor benefit by our survivorship where

so many are sacrificed.' At this point of his harangue, Zebek produced several papers (forged, as it is generally believed, by himself and the Lama), containing projects of the Russian court for a general transfer of the eldest sons, taken *en masse* from the greatest Kalmuck families, to the Imperial Court. 'Now let this be once accomplished,' he argued, 'and there is an end of all useful resistance from that day forwards. Petitions we might make, or even remonstrances; as men of words we might play a bold part; but 10 for deeds, for that sort of language by which our ancestors were used to speak—holding us by such a chain, Russia would make a jest of our wishes, knowing full well that we should not dare to make any effectual movement.'

Having thus sufficiently roused the angry passions of his vast audience, and having alarmed their fears by this pretended scheme against their first-born (an artifice which was indispensable to his purpose, because it met beforehand *every* form of amendment to his 20 proposal coming from the more moderate nobles, who would not otherwise have failed to insist upon trying the effect of bold addresses to the Empress, before resorting to any desperate extremity), Zebek-Dorchi opened his scheme of revolt, and, if so, of instant revolt; since any preparations reported at St. Petersburg would be a signal for the armies of Russia to cross into such positions from all parts of Asia as would effectually intercept their march. It is remarkable, however, that, with all his audacity and his 30 reliance upon the momentary excitement of the Kalmucks, the subtle prince did not venture, at this stage of his seduction, to make so startling a proposal as that of a flight to China. All that he held out for the present was a rapid march to the Temba or some other great river, which they were to cross, and to take up a strong position on the further bank, from which, as from a post of conscious security, they could hold a bolder language to the Czarina, and one which would have a better chance of winning a favour- 40 able audience.

These things, in the irritated condition of the simple Tartars, passed by acclamation ; and all returned homewards to push forward with the most furious speed the preparations for their awful undertaking. Rapid and energetic these of necessity were ; and in that degree they became noticeable and manifest to the Russians who happened to be intermingled with the different hordes either on commercial errands, or as agents officially from the Russian Government, some 10 in a financial, others in a diplomatic character.

Amongst these last (indeed at the head of them) was a Russian of some distinction, by name Kichinskoi, a man memorable for his vanity, and memorable also as one of the many victims to the Tartar revolution. This Kichinskoi had been sent by the Empress as her envoy to overlook the conduct of the Kalmucks ; he was styled the Grand Pristaw, or Great Commissioner, and was universally known amongst the Tartar tribes by this title. His mixed character of ambas- 20 sador and of political *surveillant*, combined with the dependent state of the Kalmucks, gave him a real weight in the Tartar councils, and might have given him a far greater, had not his outrageous self-conceit, and his arrogant confidence in his own authority as due chiefly to his personal qualities for command, led him into such harsh displays of power, and menaces so odious to the Tartar pride, as very soon made him an object of their profoundest malice. He had publicly insulted the Khan ; and, upon making a communica- 30 tion to him to the effect that some reports began to circulate, and even to reach the Empress, of a design in agitation to fly from the Imperial dominions, he had ventured to say, ' But this you dare not attempt ; I laugh at such rumours ; yes, Khan, I laugh at them to the Empress ; for you are a chained bear, and that you know.' The Khan turned away on his heel with marked disdain ; and the Pristaw, foaming at the mouth, continued to utter, amongst those of the Khan's attendants who stayed behind, to catch his real senti- 40 ments in a moment of unguarded passion, all that the blindest frenzy of rage could suggest to the most

presumptuous of fools. It was now ascertained that suspicions *had* arisen; but at the same time it was ascertained that the Pristaw spoke no more than the truth in representing himself to have discredited these suspicions. The fact was, that the mere infatuation of vanity made him believe that nothing could go on undetected by his all-piercing sagacity, and that no rebellion could prosper when rebuked by his commanding presence. The Tartars, therefore, pursued their preparations, confiding in the obstinate blindness 10 of the Grand Pristaw as in their perfect safeguard; and such it proved—to his own ruin as well as that of myriads beside.

Christmas arrived; and, a little before that time, courier upon courier came dropping in, one upon the very heels of another, to St. Petersburg, assuring the Czarina that beyond all doubt the Kalmucks were in the very crisis of departure. These dispatches came from the Governor of Astrachan, and copies were instantly forwarded to Kichinskoi. Now, it happened, 20 that between this governor—a Russian named Beketoff—and the Pristaw had been an ancient feud. The very name of Beketoff inflamed his resentment; and no sooner did he see that hated name attached to the dispatch, than he felt himself confirmed in his former views with tenfold bigotry, and wrote instantly, in terms of the most pointed ridicule, against the new alarmist, pledging his own head upon the visionariness of his alarms. Beketoff, however, was not to be put down by a few hard words, or by ridicule: he persisted 30 in his statements; the Russian Ministry were confounded by the obstinacy of the disputants; and some were beginning even to treat the Governor of Astrachan as a bore, and as the dupe of his own nervous terrors, when the memorable day arrived, the fatal 5th of January, which for ever terminated the dispute, and put a seal upon the earthly hopes and fortunes of unnumbered myriads. The Governor of Astrachan was the first to hear the news. Stung by the mixed furies of jealousy, of triumphant vengeance, and of 40 anxious ambition, he sprang into his sledge, and, at

the rate of 300 miles a day, pursued his route to St. Petersburg—rushed into the Imperial presence—announced the total realization of his worst predictions—and upon the confirmation of this intelligence by subsequent dispatches from many different posts on the Wolga, he received an Imperial commission to seize the person of his deluded enemy, and to keep him in strict captivity. These orders were eagerly fulfilled, and the unfortunate Kichinskoi soon afterwards expired of grief and mortification in the gloomy solitude of a dungeon—a victim to his own immeasurable vanity, and the blinding self-delusions of a presumption that refused all warning.

The Governor of Astrachan had been but too faithful a prophet. Perhaps even *he* was surprised at the suddenness with which the verification followed his reports. Precisely on the 5th of January, the day so solemnly appointed under religious sanctions by the Lama, the Kalmucks on the east bank of the Wolga were seen at the earliest dawn of day assembling by troops and squadrons, and in the tumultuous movement of some great morning of battle. Tens of thousands continued moving off the ground at every half-hour's interval. Women and children, to the amount of two hundred thousand and upwards, were placed upon wagons, or upon camels, and drew off by masses of twenty thousand at once—placed under suitable escorts, and continually swelled in numbers by other outlying bodies of the horde, who kept falling in at various distances upon the first and second day's march. From sixty to eighty thousand of those who were the best mounted stayed behind the rest of the tribes, with purposes of devastation and plunder more violent than prudence justified, or the amiable character of the Khan could be supposed to approve. But in this, as in other instances, he was completely overruled by the malignant counsels of Zebek-Dorchi. The first tempest of the desolating fury of the Tartars discharged itself upon their own habitations. But this, as cutting off all infirm looking backward from the hardships of their march, had been thought so necessary a measure

by all the chieftains, that even Oubacha himself was the first to authorize the act by his own example. He seized a torch previously prepared with materials the most durable as well as combustible, and steadily applied it to the timbers of his own palace. Nothing was saved from the general wreck except the portable part of the domestic utensils, and that part of the woodwork which could be applied to the manufacture of the long Tartar lances. This chapter in their memorable day's work being finished, and the whole 10 of their villages throughout a district of ten thousand square miles in one simultaneous blaze, the Tartars waited for further orders.

These, it was intended, should have taken a character of valedictory vengeance, and thus have left behind to the Czarina a dreadful commentary upon the main motives of their flight. It was the purpose of Zebek-Dorchi that all the Russian towns, churches, and buildings of every description should be given up to pillage and destruction, and such treatment applied to 20 the defenceless inhabitants as might naturally be expected from a fierce people already infuriated by the spectacle of their own outrages, and by the bloody retaliations which they must necessarily have provoked. This part of the tragedy, however, was happily intercepted by a providential disappointment at the very crisis of departure. It has been mentioned already, that the motive for selecting the depth of winter as the season of flight (which otherwise was obviously the very worst possible), had been the im- 30 possibility of effecting a junction sufficiently rapid with the tribes on the west of the Wolga, in the absence of bridges, unless by a natural bridge of ice. For this one advantage, the Kalmuck leaders had consented to aggravate by a thousandfold the calamities inevitable to a rapid flight over boundless tracts of country, with women, children, and herds of cattle—for this one single advantage; and yet, after all, it was lost. The reason never has been explained satisfactorily, but the fact was such. Some have said that 40 the signals were not properly concerted for marking

the moment of absolute departure—that is, for signifying whether the settled intention of the Eastern Kalmucks might not have been suddenly interrupted by adverse intelligence. Others have supposed that the ice might not be equally strong on both sides of the river, and might even be generally insecure for the treading of heavy and heavily laden animals such as camels. But the prevailing notion is, that some accidental movements on the 3rd and 4th of January
10 of Russian troops in the neighbourhood of the Western Kalmucks, though really having no reference to them or their plans, had been construed into certain signs that all was discovered ; and that the prudence of the Western chieftains, who, from situation, had never been exposed to those intrigues by which Zebek-Dorchi had practised upon the pride of the Eastern tribes, now stepped in to save their people from ruin. Be the cause what it might, it is certain that the Western Kalmucks were in some way prevented from
20 forming the intended junction with their brethren of the opposite bank ; and the result was, that at least one hundred thousand of these Tartars were left behind in Russia. This accident it was which saved their Russian neighbours universally from the desolation which else awaited them. One general massacre and conflagration would assuredly have surprised them, to the utter extermination of their property, their houses, and themselves, had it not been for this disappointment. But the Eastern chieftains did not dare
30 to put to hazard the safety of their brethren under the first impulse of the Czarina's vengeance for so dreadful a tragedy ; for, as they were well aware of too many circumstances by which she might discover the concurrence of the Western people in the general scheme of revolt, they justly feared that she would thence infer their concurrence also in the bloody events which marked its outset.

Little did the Western Kalmucks guess what reasons they also had for gratitude on account of an inter-
40 position so unexpected, and which at the moment they so generally deplored. Could they but have witnessed

the thousandth part of the sufferings which overtook their Eastern brethren in the first month of their sad flight, they would have blessed Heaven for their own narrow escape; and yet these sufferings of the first month were but a prelude or foretaste comparatively slight of those which afterwards succeeded.

For now began to unroll the most awful series of calamities, and the most extensive, which is anywhere recorded to have visited the sons and daughters of men. It is possible that the sudden inroads of 10 destroying nations, such as the Huns, or the Avars, or the Mongol Tartars, may have inflicted misery as extensive; but there the misery and the desolation would be sudden, like the flight of volleying lightning. Those who were spared at first would generally be spared to the end; those who perished at all would perish at once. It is possible that the French retreat from Moscow may have made some nearer approach to this calamity in duration, though still a feeble and miniature approach; for the French sufferings did not 20 commence in good earnest until about one month from the time of leaving Moscow; and though it is true that afterwards the vials of wrath were emptied upon the devoted army for six or seven weeks in succession, yet what is that to this Kalmuck tragedy, which lasted for more than as many months? But the main feature of horror by which the Tartar march was distinguished from the French, lies in the accompaniment of women and children. There were both, it is true, with the French army, but not so many as to bear any marked 30 proportion to the total numbers concerned. The French, in short, were merely an army—a host of professional destroyers, whose regular trade was bloodshed, and whose regular element was danger and suffering. But the Tartars were a nation carrying along with them more than two hundred and fifty thousand women and children, utterly unequal, for the most part, to any contest with the calamities before them. The Children of Israel were in the same circumstances as to the accompaniment of their families; but they 40 were released from the pursuit of their enemies in

- a very early stage of their flight; and their subsequent residence in the Desert was not a march, but a continued halt, and under a continued interposition of Heaven for their comfortable support. Earthquakes, again, however comprehensive in their ravages, are shocks of a moment's duration. A much nearer approach made to the wide range and the long duration of the Kalmuck tragedy may have been in a pestilence such as that which visited Athens in the
10 Peloponnesian War, or London in the reign of Charles II. There also the martyrs were counted by myriads, and the period of the desolation was counted by months. But, after all, the total amount of destruction was on a smaller scale; and there was this feature of alleviation to the *conscious* pressure of the calamity—that the misery was withdrawn from public notice into private chambers and hospitals. The siege of Jerusalem by Vespasian and his son, taken in its entire circumstances, comes nearest of all—for breadth
20 and depth of suffering, for duration, for the exasperation of the suffering from without by internal feuds, and, finally, for that last most appalling expression of the furnace-heat of the anguish in its power to extinguish the natural affections even of maternal love. But, after all, each case had circumstances of romantic misery peculiar to itself—circumstances without precedent, and (wherever human nature is ennobled by Christianity), it may be confidently hoped, never to be repeated.
- 30 The first point to be reached, before any hope of repose could be encouraged, was the River Jaik. This was not above 300 miles from the main point of departure on the Volga; and if the march thither was to be a forced one, and a severe one, it was alleged, on the other hand, that the suffering would be the more brief and transient; one summary exertion, not to be repeated, and all was achieved. Forced the march was, and severe beyond example: there the forewarning proved correct; but the promised rest
40 proved a mere phantom of the wilderness—a visionary rainbow, which fled before their hope-sick eyes, across

these interminable solitudes, for seven months of hardship and calamity, without a pause. These sufferings, by their very nature, and the circumstances under which they arose, were (like the scenery of the steppes) somewhat monotonous in their colouring and external features; what variety, however, there was, will be most naturally exhibited by tracing historically the successive stages of the general misery, exactly as it unfolded itself under the double agency of weakness still increasing from within, and hostile pressure from 10 without. Viewed in this manner, under the real order of development, it is remarkable that these sufferings of the Tartars, though under the moulding hands of accident, arrange themselves almost with a scenical propriety. They seem combined, as with the skill of an artist: the intensity of the misery advancing regularly with the advances of the march, and the stages of the calamity corresponding to the stages of the route; so that, upon raising the curtain which veils the great catastrophe, we behold one vast climax 20 of anguish, towering upwards by regular gradations, as if constructed artificially for picturesque effect—a result which might not have been surprising had it been reasonable to anticipate the same rate of speed, and even an accelerated rate, as prevailing through the later stages of the expedition. But it seemed, on the contrary, most reasonable to calculate upon a continual decrement in the rate of motion according to the increasing distance from the head-quarters of the pursuing enemy. This calculation, however, was 30 defeated by the extraordinary circumstance, that the Russian armies did not begin to close in very fiercely upon the Kalmucks until after they had accomplished a distance of full 2,000 miles: 1,000 miles further on the assaults became even more tumultuous and murderous: and already the great shadows of the Chinese Wall were dimly descried, when the frenzy and *acharnement* of the pursuers, and the bloody desperation of the miserable fugitives, had reached its uttermost extremity. Let us briefly rehearse the main 40 stages of the misery, and trace the ascending steps

of the tragedy, according to the great divisions of the route marked out by the central rivers of Asia.

The first stage, we have already said, was from the Wolga to the Jaik; the distance about 300 miles; the time allowed seven days. For the first week, therefore, the rate of marching averaged about 43 English miles a day. The weather was cold, but bracing; and, at a more moderate pace, this part of the journey might have been accomplished without much distress
10 by a people as hardy as the Kalmucks: as it was, the cattle suffered greatly from over-driving; milk began to fail even for the children; the sheep perished by wholesale; and the children themselves were saved only by the innumerable camels.

The Cossacks, who dwelt upon the banks of the Jaik, were the first among the subjects of Russia to come into collision with the Kalmucks. Great was their surprise at the suddenness of the irruption, and great also their consternation; for, according to their
20 settled custom, by far the greater part of their number was absent during the winter months at the fisheries upon the Caspian. Some who were liable to surprise at the most exposed points, fled in crowds to the fortress of Koulagina, which was immediately invested, and summoned by Oubacha. He had, however, in his train only a few light pieces of artillery; and the Russian Commandant at Koulagina, being aware of the hurried circumstances in which the Khan was placed, and that he stood upon the very edge, as it were,
30 of a renewed flight, felt encouraged by these considerations to a more obstinate resistance than might else have been advisable, with an enemy so little disposed to observe the usages of civilized warfare. The period of his anxiety was not long: on the fifth day of the siege, he descried from the walls a succession of Tartar couriers, mounted upon fleet Bactrian camels, crossing the vast plains around the fortress at a furious pace, and riding into the Kalmuck encampment at various points. Great agitation appeared immediately to fol-
40 low: orders were soon after dispatched in all directions; and it became speedily known that upon a distant

flank of the Kalmuck movement a bloody and exterminating battle had been fought the day before, in which one entire tribe of the Khan's dependants, numbering not less than 9,000 fighting-men, had perished to the last man. This was the *ouloss*, or clan, called Feka-Zechorr, between whom and the Cossacks there was a feud of ancient standing. In selecting, therefore, the points of attack, on occasion of the present hasty inroad, the Cossack chiefs were naturally eager so to direct their efforts as to combine with the 10 service of the Empress some gratification to their own party hatreds: more especially as the present was likely to be their final opportunity for revenge, if the Kalmuck evasion should prosper. Having, therefore, concentrated as large a body of Cossack cavalry as circumstances allowed, they attacked the hostile *ouloss* with a precipitation which denied to it all means for communicating with Oubacha; for the necessity of commanding an ample range of pasturage, to meet the necessities of their vast flocks and herds, had separated 20 this *ouloss* from the Khan's head-quarters by an interval of 80 miles; and thus it was, and not from oversight, that it came to be thrown entirely upon its own resources. These had proved insufficient: retreat, from the exhausted state of their horses and camels, no less than from the prodigious encumbrances of their live stock, was absolutely out of the question: quarter was disdained on the one side, and would not have been granted on the other: and thus it had happened that the setting sun of that one day (the thirteenth from 30 the first opening of the revolt) threw his parting rays upon the final agonies of an ancient *ouloss*, stretched upon a bloody field, who on that day's dawning had held and styled themselves an independent nation.

Universal consternation was diffused through the wide borders of the Khan's encampment by this disastrous intelligence; not so much on account of the numbers slain, or the total extinction of a powerful ally, as because the position of the Cossack force was likely to put to hazard the future advances of the Kal- 40 mucks, or at least to retard and hold them in check

until the heavier columns of the Russian army should arrive upon their flanks. The siege of Koulagina was instantly raised ; and that signal, so fatal to the happiness of the women and their children, once again resounded through the tents—the signal for flight, and this time for a flight more rapid than ever. About 150 miles ahead of their present position, there arose a tract of hilly country, forming a sort of margin to the vast sea-like expanse of champaign savannahs, 10 steppes, and occasionally of sandy deserts, which stretched away on each side of this margin both eastwards and westwards, Pretty nearly in the centre of this hilly range lay a narrow defile, through which passed the nearest and the most practicable route to the river Torgau (the further bank of which river offered the next great station of security for a general halt). It was the more essential to gain this pass before the Cossacks, inasmuch as not only would the delay in forcing the pass give time to the Russian 20 pursuing columns for combining their attacks, and for bringing up their artillery, but also because (even if all enemies in pursuit were thrown out of the question) it was held by those best acquainted with the difficult and obscure geography of these pathless steppes—that the loss of this one narrow strait amongst the hills would have the effect of throwing them (as their only alternative in a case where so wide a sweep of pasturage was required) upon a circuit of at least 500 miles extra ; besides that, after all, this circuitous route 30 would carry them to the Torgau at a point ill fitted for the passage of their heavy baggage. The defile in the hills, therefore, it was resolved to gain ; and yet, unless they moved upon it with the velocity of light cavalry, there was little chance but it would be found pre-occupied by the Cossacks. They also, it is true, had suffered greatly in the bloody action with the defeated *ouloss* ; but the excitement of victory, and the intense sympathy with their unexampled triumph, had again swelled their ranks, and would 40 probably act with the force of a vortex to draw in their simple countrymen from the Caspian. The question,

therefore, of preoccupation was reduced to a race. The Cossacks were marching upon an oblique line not above 50 miles longer than that which led to the same point from the Kalmuck head-quarters before Koulagina; and therefore, without the most furious haste on the part of the Kalmucks, there was not a chance for them, burdened and 'trashed' as they were, to anticipate so agile a light cavalry as the Cossacks in seizing this important pass.

Dreadful were the feelings of the poor women on 10 hearing this exposition of the case. For they easily understood that too capital an interest (the *summa rerum*) was now at stake, to allow of any regard to minor interests, or what would be considered such in their present circumstances. The dreadful week already passed—their inauguration in misery—was yet fresh in their remembrance. The scars of suffering were impressed not only upon their memories, but upon their very persons and the persons of their children. And they knew, that where no speed had much 20 chance of meeting the cravings of the chieftains, no test would be accepted, short of absolute exhaustion, that as much had been accomplished as could have been accomplished. Weseloff, the Russian captive, has recorded the silent wretchedness with which the women and elder boys assisted in drawing the tent-ropes. On the 5th of January all had been animation, and the joyousness of indefinite expectation; now, on the contrary, a brief but bitter experience had taught them to take an amended calculation of what it was 30 that lay before them.

One whole day and far into the succeeding night had the renewed flight continued; the sufferings had been greater than before; for the cold had been more intense; and many perished out of the living creatures through every class, except only the camels—whose powers of endurance seemed equally adapted to cold and to heat. The second morning, however, brought an alleviation to the distress. Snow had begun to fall; and though not deep at present, it was easily foreseen 40 that it soon would be so; and that, as a halt would in

that case become unavoidable, no plan could be better than that of staying where they were ; especially as the same cause would check the advance of the Cossacks. Here then was the last interval of comfort which gleamed upon the unhappy nation during their whole migration. For ten days the snow continued to fall with little intermission. At the end of that time keen bright frosty weather succeeded ; the drifting had ceased ; in three days the smooth expanse became
10 firm enough to support the treading of the camels ; and the flight was recommenced. But during the halt much domestic comfort had been enjoyed ; and for the last time universal plenty. The cows and oxen had perished in such vast numbers on the previous marches, that an order was now issued to turn what remained to account by slaughtering the whole, and salting whatever part should be found to exceed the immediate consumption. This measure led to a scene of general banqueting and even of festivity amongst all who were
20 not incapacitated for joyous emotions by distress of mind, by grief for the unhappy experience of the few last days, and by anxiety for the too gloomy future. Seventy thousand persons of all ages had already perished ; exclusively of the many thousand allies who had been cut down by the Cossack sabre. And the losses in reversion were likely to be many more. For rumours began now to arrive from all quarters, by the mounted couriers whom the Khan had dispatched to the rear and to each flank as well
30 as in advance, that large masses of the Imperial troops were converging from all parts of Central Asia to the fords of the river Torgau, as the most convenient point for intercepting the flying tribes ; and it was by this time well known that a powerful division was close in their rear, and was retarded only by the numerous artillery which had been judged necessary to support their operations. New motives were thus daily arising for quickening the motions of the wretched Kalmuks, and for exhausting those who were already
40 but too much exhausted.

It was not until the 2nd day of February that the

Khan's advanced guard came in sight of Ouchim, the defile among the hills of Mougaldchares, in which they anticipated so bloody an opposition from the Cossacks. A pretty large body of these light cavalry had, in fact, preoccupied the pass by some hours; but the Khan having two great advantages—namely, a strong body of infantry, who had been conveyed by sections of five on about 200 camels, and some pieces of light artillery which he had not yet been forced to abandon—soon began to make a serious impression 10 upon this unsupported detachment; and they would probably at any rate have retired; but at the very moment when they were making some dispositions in that view, Zebek-Dorchi appeared upon their rear with a body of trained riflemen, who had distinguished themselves in the war with Turkey. These men had contrived to crawl unobserved over the cliffs which skirted the ravine, availing themselves of the dry beds of the summer torrents, and other inequalities of the ground, to conceal their movement. Disorder and 20 trepidation ensued instantly in the Cossack files; the Khan, who had been waiting with the *élite* of his heavy cavalry, charged furiously upon them; total overthrow followed to the Cossacks, and a slaughter such as in some measure avenged the recent bloody extermination of their allies, the ancient *oulloss* of Feka-Zechorr. The slight horses of the Cossacks were unable to support the weight of heavy Polish dragoons and a body of trained *cameleers* (that is, cuirassiers 30 mounted on camels); hardy they were, but not strong, nor a match for their antagonists in weight; and their extraordinary efforts through the last few days to gain their present position had greatly diminished their powers for effecting an escape. Very few, in fact, *did* escape; and the bloody day at Ouchim became as memorable amongst the Cossacks as that which, about twenty days before, had signalized the complete annihilation of the Feka-Zechorr.

The road was now open to the river Irgitch, and as yet even far beyond it to the Torgau; but how long 40 this state of things would continue, was every day

- more doubtful. Certain intelligence was now received that a large Russian army, well appointed in every arm, was advancing upon the Torgau, under the command of General Traubenberg. This officer was to be joined on his route by ten thousand Bashkirs, and pretty nearly the same amount of Kirghises—both hereditary enemies of the Kalmucks, both exasperated to a point of madness by the bloody trophies which Oubacha and Momotbacha had, in late years, won from
- 10 such of their compatriots as served under the Sultan. The Czarina's yoke these wild nations bore with submissive patience, but not the hands by which it had been imposed; and, accordingly, catching with eagerness at the present occasion offered to their vengeance, they sent an assurance to the Czarina of their perfect obedience to her commands, and at the same time a message significantly declaring in what spirit they meant to execute them, viz., 'that they would not trouble her Majesty with prisoners'.
- 20 Here then arose, as before with the Cossacks, a race for the Kalmucks with the regular armies of Russia, and concurrently with nations as fierce and semi-humanized as themselves, besides that they had been stung into threefold activity by the furies of mortified pride and military abasement, under the eyes of the Turkish Sultan. The forces, and more especially the artillery, of Russia were far too overwhelming to bear the thought of a regular opposition in pitched battles, even with a less dilapidated state of their resources
- 30 than they could reasonably expect at the period of their arrival on the Torgau. In their speed lay their only hope—in strength of foot, as before, and not in strength of arm. Onward, therefore, the Kalmucks pressed, marking the lines of their wide-extending march over the sad solitudes of the steppes by a never-ending chain of corpses. The old and the young, the sick man on his couch, the mother with her baby—all were dropping fast. Sightings such as these, with the many rueful aggravations incident
- 40 to the helpless condition of infancy—of disease and of female weakness abandoned to the wolves amidst

a howling wilderness, continued to track their course through a space of full two thousand miles; for so much, at the least, it was likely to prove, including the circuits to which they were often compelled by rivers or hostile tribes, from the point of starting on the Wolga, until they could reach their destined halting ground on the east bank of the Torgau. For the first seven weeks of this march their sufferings had been embittered by the excessive severity of the cold; and every night—so long as wood was to be had 10 for fires, either from the lading of the camels, or from the desperate sacrifice of their baggage-wagons, or (as occasionally happened) from the forests which skirted the banks of the many rivers which crossed their path—no spectacle was more frequent than that of a circle, composed of men, women, and children gathered by hundreds round a central fire, all dead and stiff at the return of morning light. Myriads were left behind from pure exhaustion, of whom none had a chance, under the combined evils which beset them, of surviving through the next twenty-four hours. Frost, however, and snow at length ceased to persecute; the vast extent of the march at length brought them into more genial latitudes, and the unusual duration of the march was gradually bringing them into more genial seasons of the year. Two thousand miles had at last been traversed; February, March, April, were gone; the balmy month of May had opened, vernal sights and sounds came from every side to comfort the heart-weary travellers; and at last, in the latter end of May, 30 crossing the Torgau, they took up a position where they hoped to find liberty to repose themselves for many weeks in comfort as well as in security, and to draw such supplies from the fertile neighbourhood as might restore their shattered forces to a condition for executing, with less of wreck and ruin, the large remainder of the journey.

Yes; it was true that two thousand miles of wandering had been completed, but in a period of nearly five months, and with the terrific sacrifice of at least two 40 hundred and fifty thousand souls, to say nothing

of herds and flocks past all reckoning. These had all perished: ox, cow, horse, mule, ass, sheep, or goat, not one survived—only the camels. These arid and adust creatures, looking like the mummies of some antediluvian animals, without the affections or sensibilities of flesh and blood—these only still erected their speaking eyes to the eastern heavens, and had to all appearance come out from this long tempest of trial unscathed and hardly diminished. The Khan, knowing how
10 much he was individually answerable for the misery which had been sustained, must have wept tears even more bitter than those of Xerxes, when he threw his eyes over the myriads whom he had assembled: for the tears of Xerxes were unmingled with remorse. Whatever amends were in his power the Khan resolved to make, by sacrifices to the general good of all personal regards; and accordingly, even at this point of their advance, he once more deliberately brought
20 under review the whole question of the revolt. The question was formally debated before the Council, whether, even at this point, they should untread their steps, and, throwing themselves upon the Czarina's mercy, return to their old allegiance? In that case, Oubacha professed himself willing to become the scapegoat for the general transgression. This, he argued, was no fantastic scheme, but even easy of accomplishment; for the unlimited and sacred power of the Khan, so well known to the Empress, made
it absolutely iniquitous to attribute any separate
30 responsibility to the people—upon the Khan rested the guilt, upon the Khan would descend the Imperial vengeance. This proposal was applauded for its generosity, but was energetically opposed by Zebek-Dorchi. Were they to lose the whole journey of two thousand miles? Was their misery to perish without fruit? True it was that they had yet reached only the half-way house; but, in that respect, the motives were evenly balanced for retreat or for advance. Either way they would have pretty nearly the same
40 distance to traverse, but with this difference—that, forwards, their route lay through lands comparatively

fertile; backwards, through a blasted wilderness, rich only in memorials of their sorrow, and hideous to Kalmuck eyes by the trophies of their calamity. Besides, though the Empress might accept an excuse for the past, would she the less forbear to suspect for the future? The Czarina's *pardon* they might obtain, but could they ever hope to recover her *confidence*? Doubtless there would now be a standing presumption against them, an immortal ground of jealousy; and a jealous government would be but another name ¹⁰ for a harsh one. Finally, whatever motives there ever had been for the revolt surely remained unimpaired by anything that had occurred. In reality, the revolt was, after all, no revolt, but (strictly speaking) a return to their old allegiance; since, not above one hundred and fifty years ago (*viz.*, in the year 1616), their ancestors had revolted from the Emperor of China. They had now tried both governments; and for them China was the land of promise, and Russia the house of bondage. 20

Spite, however, of all that Zebek could say or do, the yearning of the people was strongly in behalf of the Khan's proposal; the pardon of their prince, they persuaded themselves, would be readily conceded by the Empress: and there is little doubt that they would at this time have thrown themselves gladly upon the Imperial mercy; when suddenly all was defeated by the arrival of two envoys from Trautenberg. This general had reached the fortress of Orsk, after a very painful march, on the 12th of April; ³⁰ thence he set forwards towards Oriembourg, which he reached upon the 1st of June, having been joined on his route at various times through the month of May by the Kirghises and a corps of ten thousand Bashkirs. From Oriembourg he sent forward his official offers to the Khan, which were harsh and peremptory, holding out no specific stipulations as to pardon or impunity, and exacting unconditional submission as the preliminary price of any cessation from military operations. The personal character ⁴⁰ of Trautenberg, which was anything but energetic,

and the condition of his army, disorganized in a great measure by the length and severity of the march, made it probable that, with a little time for negotiation, a more conciliatory tone would have been assumed. But, unhappily for all parties, sinister events occurred in the meantime, such as effectually put an end to every hope of the kind.

The two envoys sent forward by Traubenberg had reported to this officer that a distance of only ten days' march lay between his own head-quarters and those of the Khan. Upon this fact transpiring, the Kirghises, by their prince Nourali, and the Bashkirs, entreated the Russian general to advance without delay. Once having placed his cannon in position, so as to command the Kalmuck camp, the fate of the rebel Khan and his people would be in his own hands : and they would themselves form his advanced guard. Traubenberg, however (*why* has not been certainly explained), refused to march, grounding his refusal upon the condition of his army, and their absolute need of refreshment. Long and fierce was the altercation ; but at length, seeing no chance of prevailing, and dreading above all other events the escape of their detested enemy, the ferocious Bashkirs went off in a body by forced marches. In six days they reached the Torgau, crossed by swimming their horses, and fell upon the Kalmucks, who were dispersed for many a league in search of food or provender for their camels. The first day's action was one vast succession of independent skirmishes, diffused over a field of thirty to forty miles in extent ; one party often breaking up into three or four, and again (according to the accidents of ground) three or four blending into one ; flight and pursuit, rescue and total overthrow, going on simultaneously, under all varieties of form, in all quarters of the plain. The Bashkirs had found themselves obliged, by the scattered state of the Kalmucks, to split up into innumerable sections ; and thus, for some hours, it had been impossible for the most practised eye to collect the general tendency of the day's fortune. Both the Khan and Zebek-Dorchi were at one moment made prisoners,

and more than once in imminent danger of being cut down; but at length Zebek succeeded in rallying a strong column of infantry, which, with the support of the camel-corps on each flank, compelled the Bashkirs to retreat. Clouds, however, of these wild cavalry continued to arrive through the next two days and nights, followed or accompanied by the Kirghises. These being viewed as the advanced parties of Traubenberg's army, the Kalmuck chieftains saw no hope of safety but in flight; and in this way it happened that 10 a retreat, which had so recently been brought to a pause, was resumed at the very moment when the unhappy fugitives were anticipating a deep repose without further molestation the whole summer through.

It seemed as though every variety of wretchedness were predestined to the Kalmucks; and as if their sufferings were incomplete, unless they were rounded and matured by all that the most dreadful agencies of summer's heat could superadd to those of frost and winter. To this sequel of their story I shall immedi- 20 ately revert, after first noticing a little romantic episode which occurred at this point between Oubacha and his unprincipled cousin Zebek-Dorchi.

There was at the time of the Kalmuck flight from the Wolga a Russian gentleman of some rank at the court of the Khan, whom, for political reasons, it was thought necessary to carry along with them as a captive. For some weeks his confinement had been very strict, and in one or two instances cruel. But, as the increasing distance was continually diminishing the 30 chance of escape, and perhaps, also, as the misery of the guards gradually withdrew their attention from all minor interests to their own personal sufferings, the vigilance of the custody grew more and more relaxed; until at length, upon a petition to the Khan, Mr. Weseloff was formally restored to liberty; and it was understood that he might use his liberty in whatever way he chose, even for returning to Russia, if that should be his wish. Accordingly, he was making active preparations for his journey to St. Peters- 40 burg, when it occurred to Zebek-Dorchi that, not

improbably, in some of the battles which were then anticipated with Traubenberg, it might happen to them to lose some prisoner of rank, in which case the Russian Weseloff would be a pledge in their hands for negotiating an exchange. Upon this plea, to his own severe affliction, the Russian was detained until the further pleasure of the Khan. The Khan's name, indeed, was used through the whole affair; but, as it seemed, with so little concurrence on his part, that,

10 when Weseloff in a private audience humbly remonstrated upon the injustice done him, and the cruelty of thus sporting with his feelings by setting him at liberty, and, as it were, tempting him into dreams of home and restored happiness only for the purpose of blighting them, the good-natured prince disclaimed all participation in the affair, and went so far in proving his sincerity, as even to give him permission to effect his escape; and, as a ready means of commencing it without raising suspicion, the Khan men-

20 tioned to Mr. Weseloff that he had just then received a message from the Hetman of the Bashkirs, soliciting a private interview on the banks of the Torgau at a spot pointed out: that interview was arranged for the coming night; and Mr. Weseloff might go in the Khan's suite, which on either side was not to exceed three persons. Weseloff was a prudent man, acquainted with the world, and he read treachery in the very outline of this scheme, as stated by the Khan—treachery against the Khan's person. He

30 mused a little, and then communicated so much of his suspicions to the Khan as might put him on his guard; but, upon further consideration, he begged leave to decline the honour of accompanying the Khan. The fact was, that three Kalmucks, who had strong motives for returning to their countrymen on the west bank of the Wolga, guessing the intentions of Weseloff, had offered to join him in his escape. These men the Khan would probably find himself obliged to countenance in their project; so that it

40 became a point of honour with Weseloff to conceal their intentions, and therefore to accomplish the

evasion from the camp (of which the first steps only would be hazardous), without risking the notice of the Khan.

The district in which they were now encamped abounded through many hundred miles with wild horses of a docile and beautiful breed. Each of the four fugitives had caught from seven to ten of these spirited creatures in the course of the last few days: this raised no suspicion, for the rest of the Kalmucks had been making the same sort of provision against 10 the coming toils of their remaining route to China. These horses were secured by halters, and hidden about dusk in the thickets which lined the margin of the river. To these thickets, about ten at night, the four fugitives repaired; they took a circuitous path, which drew them as little as possible within danger of challenge from any of the outposts or of the patrols which had been established on the quarters where the Bashkirs lay; and in three-quarters of an hour they reached the rendezvous. The moon had 20 now risen, the horses were unfastened, and they were in the act of mounting, when suddenly the deep silence of the woods was disturbed by a violent uproar, and the clashing of arms. Weseloff fancied that he heard the voice of the Khan shouting for assistance. He remembered the communication made by that prince in the morning; and requesting his companions to support him, he rode off in the direction of the sound. A very short distance brought him to an open glade within the wood, where he beheld 30 four men contending with a party of at least nine or ten. Two of the four were dismounted at the very instant of Weseloff's arrival; one of these he recognized almost certainly as the Khan, who was fighting hand to hand, but at great disadvantage, with two of the adverse horsemen. Seeing that no time was to be lost, Weseloff fired and brought down one of the two. His companions discharged their carbines at the same moment, and then all rushed simultaneously into the little open area. The thundering 40 sound of about thirty horses all rushing at once into

a narrow space, gave the impression that a whole troop of cavalry was coming down upon the assailants; who accordingly wheeled about and fled with one impulse. Weseloff advanced to the dismounted cavalier, who, as he expected, proved to be the Khan. The man whom Weseloff had shot was lying dead; and both were shocked, though Weseloff at least was not surprised, on stooping down and scrutinizing his features, to recognize a well-known confidential servant of Zebek-Dorchi. Nothing was said by either party; the Khan rode off escorted by Weseloff and his companions, and for some time a dead silence prevailed. The situation of Weseloff was delicate and critical; to leave the Khan at this point, was probably to cancel their recent services; for he might be again crossed on his path, and again attacked by the very party from whom he had just been delivered. Yet, on the other hand, to return to the camp, was to endanger the chances of accomplishing the escape.

20 The Khan also was apparently revolving all this in his mind, for at length he broke silence, and said, 'I comprehend your situation; and under other circumstances I might feel it my duty to detain your companions. But it would ill become me to do so after the important service you have just rendered me. Let us turn a little to the left. There, where you see the watch-fire, is an outpost. Attend me so far. I am then safe. You may turn and pursue your enterprize; for the circumstances under which

30 you will appear, as my escort, are sufficient to shield you from all suspicion for the present. I regret having no better means at my disposal for testifying my gratitude. But tell me before we part—Was it accident only which led you to my rescue? Or had you acquired any knowledge of the plot by which I was decoyed into this snare?' Weseloff answered very candidly, that mere accident had brought him to the spot at which he heard the uproar, but that *having* heard it, and connecting it with the Khan's communication of the morning, he had then designedly

40 gone after the sound in a way which he certainly

should not have done at so critical a moment, unless in the expectation of finding the Khan assaulted by assassins. A few minutes after they reached the outpost at which it became safe to leave the Tartar chieftain; and immediately the four fugitives commenced a flight which is perhaps without a parallel in the annals of travelling. Each of them led six or seven horses besides the one he rode; and by shifting from one to the other (like the ancient Desultors of the Roman circus), so as never to burden 10 the same horse for more than half an hour at a time, they continued to advance at the rate of 200 miles in the 24 hours for three days consecutively. After that time, conceiving themselves beyond pursuit, they proceeded less rapidly; though still with a velocity which staggered the belief of Weseloff's friends in after years. He was, however, a man of high principle, and always adhered firmly to the details of his printed report. One of the circumstances there stated is, that they continued to pursue the route by which 20 the Kalmucks had fled, never for an instant finding any difficulty in tracing it by the skeletons and other memorials of their calamities. In particular, he mentions vast heaps of money as part of the valuable property which it had been found necessary to sacrifice. These heaps were found lying still untouched in the deserts. From these Weseloff and his companions took as much as they could conveniently carry; and this it was, with the price of their beautiful horses, which they afterwards sold at one of the 30 Russian military settlements for about £15 a-piece, which eventually enabled them to pursue their journey in Russia. This journey, as regarded Weseloff in particular, was closed by a tragical catastrophe. He was at that time young, and the only child of a doting mother. Her affliction under the violent abduction of her son had been excessive, and probably had undermined her constitution. Still she had supported it. Weseloff, giving way to the natural impulses of his filial affection, had imprudently posted 40 through Russia to his mother's house without warn-

ing of his approach. He rushed precipitately into her presence; and she, who had stood the shocks of sorrow, was found unequal to the shock of joy too sudden and too acute. She died upon the spot.

I now revert to the final scenes of the Kalmuck flight. These it would be useless to pursue circumstantially through the whole two thousand miles of suffering which remained; for the character of that suffering was even more monotonous than on the
10 former half of the flight, but also more severe. Its main elements were excessive heat, with the accompaniments of famine and thirst, but aggravated at every step by the murderous attacks of their cruel enemies the Bashkirs and the Kirghises.

These people, 'more fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea,' stuck to the unhappy Kalmucks like a swarm of enraged hornets. And very often, whilst *they* were attacking them in the rear, their advanced parties and flanks were attacked with almost equal
20 fury by the people of the country which they were traversing; and with good reason, since the law of self-preservation had now obliged the fugitive Tartars to plunder provisions, and to forage wherever they passed. In this respect their condition was a constant oscillation of wretchedness; for sometimes, pressed by grinding famine, they took a circuit of perhaps a hundred miles, in order to strike into a land rich in the comforts of life; but in such a land they
30 were sure to find a crowded population, of which every arm was raised in unrelenting hostility, with all the advantages of local knowledge, and with constant preoccupation of all the defensible positions, mountain passes, or bridges. Sometimes, again, wearied out with this mode of suffering, they took a circuit of perhaps a hundred miles, in order to strike into a land with few or no inhabitants. But in such a land they were sure to meet absolute starvation. Then, again, whether with or without this plague of starvation, whether with or without this
40 plague of hostility in front, whatever might be the

'fierce varieties' of their misery in this respect, no rest ever came to their unhappy rear; '*post equitem sedet atra cura*'; it was a torment like the undying worm of conscience. And, upon the whole, it presented a spectacle altogether unprecedented in the history of mankind. Private and personal malignity is not unfrequently immortal; but rare indeed is it to find the same pertinacity of malice in a nation. And what embittered the interest was, that the malice was reciprocal. Thus far the parties met upon equal 10 terms; but that equality only sharpened the sense of their dire inequality as to other circumstances. The Bashkirs were ready to fight 'from morn to dewy eve'. The Kalmucks, on the contrary, were always obliged to run; was it *from* their enemies as creatures whom they feared? No; but *towards* their friends—towards that final haven of China—as what was hourly implored by the prayers of their wives, and the tears of their children. But, though they fled unwillingly, too often they fled in vain—20 being unwillingly recalled. There lay the torment. Every day the Bashkirs fell upon them; every day the same unprofitable battle was renewed; as a matter of course, the Kalmucks recalled part of their advanced guard to fight them; every day the battle raged for hours, and uniformly with the same result. For no sooner did the Bashkirs find themselves too heavily pressed, and that the Kalmuck march had been retarded by some hours, than they retired into the boundless deserts, where all pursuit was hopeless. 30 But if the Kalmucks resolved to press forward, regardless of their enemies, in that case their attacks became so fierce and overwhelming, that the general safety seemed likely to be brought into question; nor could any effectual remedy be applied to the case, even for each separate day, except by a most embarrassing halt, and by countermarches, that, to men in their circumstances, were almost worse than death. It will not be surprising, that the irritation of such a systematic persecution, superadded to a previous 40 and hereditary hatred, and accompanied by the sting-

ing consciousness of utter impotence as regarded all effectual vengeance, should gradually have inflamed the Kalmuck animosity into the wildest expression of downright madness and frenzy. Indeed, long before the frontiers of China were approached, the hostility of both sides had assumed the appearance much more of a warfare amongst wild beasts, than amongst creatures acknowledging the restraints of reason or the claims of a common nature. The
10 spectacle became too atrocious; it was that of a host of lunatics pursued by a host of fiends.

On a fine morning in early autumn of the year 1771, Kien Long, the Emperor of China, was pursuing his amusements in a wild frontier district lying on the outside of the Great Wall. For many hundred square leagues the country was desolate of inhabitants, but rich in woods of ancient growth, and overrun with game of every description. In a central spot of this solitary region, the Emperor had built a
20 gorgeous hunting lodge, to which he resorted annually for recreation and relief from the cares of government. Led onwards in pursuit of game, he had rambled to a distance of 200 miles or more from this lodge, followed at a little distance by a sufficient military escort, and every night pitching his tent in a different situation, until at length he had arrived on the very margin of the vast central deserts of Asia. Here he was standing by accident at an opening of his pavilion, enjoying the morning sunshine, when suddenly to
30 the westwards there arose a vast cloudy vapour, which by degrees expanded, mounted, and seemed to be slowly diffusing itself over the whole face of the heavens. By and by this vast sheet of mist began to thicken towards the horizon, and to roll forward in billowy volumes. The Emperor's suite assembled from all quarters. The silver trumpets were sounded in the rear, and from all the glades and forest avenues began to trot forward towards the pavilion the yagers—half cavalry, half huntsmen—who composed the
40 Imperial escort. Conjecture was on the stretch to

divine the cause of this phenomenon, and the interest continually increased, in proportion as simple curiosity gradually deepened into the anxiety of uncertain danger. At first it had been imagined that some vast troops of deer, or other wild animals of the chase, had been disturbed in their forest haunts by the Emperor's movements, or possibly by wild beasts prowling for prey, and might be fetching a compass by way of re-entering the forest grounds at some remoter points secure from molestation. But this conjecture was 10 dissipated by the slow increase of the cloud, and the steadiness of its motion. In the course of two hours the vast phenomenon had advanced to a point which was judged to be within five miles of the spectators, though all calculations of distance were difficult, and often fallacious, when applied to the endless expanses of the Tartar deserts. Through the next hour, during which the gentle morning breeze had a little freshened, the dusty vapour had developed itself far and wide into the appearance of 20 huge aerial draperies, hanging in mighty volumes from the sky to the earth; and at particular points, where the eddies of the breeze acted upon the pendulous skirts of these aerial curtains, rents were perceived, sometimes taking the form of regular arches, portals, and windows, through which began dimly to gleam the heads of camels 'indorsed' with human beings—and at intervals the moving of men and horses in tumultuous array—and then through other openings or vistas at far distant points the flashing of 30 polished arms. But sometimes, as the wind slackened or died away, all those openings, of whatever form, in the cloudy pall would slowly close, and for a time the whole pageant was shut up from view; although the growing din, the clamours, shrieks, and groans, ascending from infuriated myriads, reported, in a language not to be misunderstood, what was going on behind the cloudy screen.

It was in fact the Kalmuck host, now in the last extremities of their exhaustion, and very fast ap- 40 proaching to that final stage of privation and killing

misery, beyond which few or none could have lived. but also, happily for themselves, fast approaching (in a literal sense) that final stage of their long pilgrimage, at which they would meet hospitality on a scale of royal magnificence, and full protection from their enemies. These enemies, however, as yet, were still hanging on their rear as fiercely as ever, though this day was destined to be the last of their hideous persecution. The Khan had, in fact, sent forward couriers with all the requisite statements and petitions, addressed to the Emperor of China. These had been duly received, and preparations made in consequence to welcome the Kalmucks with the most paternal benevolence. But, as these couriers had been dispatched from the Torgau at the moment of arrival thither, and before the advance of Trautenberg had made it necessary for the Khan to order a hasty renewal of the flight, the Emperor had not looked for their arrival on his frontiers until full three months after the present time. The Khan had indeed expressly notified his intention to pass the summer heats on the banks of the Torgau, and to recommence his retreat about the beginning of September. The subsequent change of plan being unknown to Kien Long, left him for some time in doubt as to the true interpretation to be put upon this mighty apparition in the desert; but at length the savage clamours of hostile fury, and the clangour of weapons, unveiled to the Emperor the true nature of those unexpected calamities, which had so prematurely precipitated the Kalmuck measures.

Apprehending the real state of affairs, the Emperor instantly perceived that the first act of his fatherly care for these erring children (as he esteemed them), now returning to their ancient obedience, must be—to deliver them from their pursuers. And this was less difficult than might have been supposed. Not many miles in the rear was a body of well-appointed cavalry, with a strong detachment of artillery, who always attended the Emperor's motions. These were hastily summoned. Meantime it occurred to the train

of courtiers that some danger might arise to the Emperor's person from the proximity of a lawless enemy; and accordingly he was induced to retire a little to the rear. It soon appeared, however, to those who watched the vapoury shroud in the desert, that its motion was not such as would argue the direction of the march to be exactly upon the pavilion, but rather in a diagonal line, making an angle of full 45 degrees with that line in which the imperial *cortège* had been standing, and therefore with a distance continually increasing. Those who knew the country judged that the Kalmucks were making for a large fresh-water lake about seven or eight miles distant; they were right; and to that point the imperial cavalry was ordered up; and it was precisely in that spot, and about three hours after, and at noonday on the 8th of September, that the great exodus of the Kalmuck Tartars was brought to a final close, and with a scene of such memorable and hellish fury, as formed an appropriate winding up to an expedition in all its parts and details so awfully disastrous. The Emperor was not personally present, or at least he saw whatever he *did* see from too great a distance to discriminate its individual features; but he records in his written memorial the report made to him of this scene by some of his own officers.

The Lake of Tengis, near the dreadful desert of Kobi, lay in a hollow amongst hills of a moderate height, ranging generally from two to three thousand feet high. About eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the Chinese cavalry reached the summit of a road which led through a cradle-like dip in the mountains right down upon the margin of the lake. From this pass, elevated about two thousand feet above the level of the water, they continued to descend, by a very winding and difficult road, for an hour and a half; and during the whole of this descent they were compelled to be inactive spectators of the fiendish spectacle below. The Kalmucks, reduced by this time from about six hundred thousand souls to two hundred and sixty thousand, and after enduring for so long a time the

miseries I have previously described—outrageous heat, famine, and the destroying scimitar of the Kirghises and the Bashkirs—had for the last ten days been traversing a hideous desert, where no vestiges were seen of vegetation, and no drop of water could be found. Camels and men were already so overladen, that it was a mere impossibility that they should carry a tolerable sufficiency for the passage of this frightful wilderness. On the eighth day, the wretched daily allowance, which had been continually diminishing, failed entirely; and thus, for two days of insupportable fatigue, the horrors of thirst had been carried to the fiercest extremity. Upon this last morning, at the sight of the hills and the forest scenery, which announced to those who acted as guides the neighbourhood of the lake of Tengis, all the people rushed along with maddening eagerness to the anticipated solace. The day grew hotter and hotter, the people more and more exhausted, and gradually, in the general rush forwards to the lake, all discipline and command were lost—all attempts to preserve a rearguard were neglected—the wild Bashkirs rode in amongst the encumbered people, and slaughtered them by wholesale, and almost without resistance. Screams and tumultuous shouts proclaimed the progress of the massacre; but none heeded—none halted; all alike, pauper or noble, continued to rush on with maniacal haste to the waters—all with faces blackened by the heat preying upon the liver, and with tongue drooping from the mouth. The cruel Bashkir was affected by the same misery, and manifested the same symptoms of his misery as the wretched Kalmuck; the murderer was oftentimes in the same frantic misery as his murdered victim—many indeed (an ordinary effect of thirst) in both nations had become lunatic, and in this state, whilst mere multitude and condensation of bodies alone opposed any check to the destroying scimitar and the trampling hoof, the lake was reached; and into that the whole vast body of enemies together rushed, and together continued to rush, forgetful of all things at that moment but of one almighty instinct. This

absorption of the thoughts in one maddening appetite lasted for a single half-hour; but in the next arose the final scene of parting vengeance. Far and wide the waters of the solitary lake were instantly dyed red with blood and gore: here rode a party of savage Bashkirs, hewing off heads as fast as the swathes fall before the mower's scythe; there stood unarmed Kalmucks in a death-grapple with their detested foes, both up to the middle in water, and oftentimes both sinking together below the surface, from weakness or 10 from struggles, and perishing in each other's arms. Did the Bashkirs at any point collect into a cluster for the sake of giving impetus to the assault? Thither were the camels driven in fiercely by those who rode them, generally women or boys; and even these quiet creatures were forced into a share in this carnival of murder, by trampling down as many as they could strike prostrate with the lash of their fore-legs. Every moment the water grew more polluted; and yet every moment fresh myriads came up to the lake 20 and rushed in, not able to resist their frantic thirst, and swallowing large draughts of water, visibly contaminated with the blood of their slaughtered compatriots. Wheresoever the lake was shallow enough to allow of men raising their heads above the water, there, for scores of acres, were to be seen all forms of ghastly fear, of agonizing struggle, of spasm, of death, and the fear of death—revenge, and the lunacy of revenge—until the neutral spectators, of whom there were not a few, now descending the eastern side of the lake, 30 at length averted their eyes in horror. This horror, which seemed incapable of further addition, was, however, increased by an unexpected incident: the Bashkirs, beginning to perceive here and there the approach of the Chinese cavalry, felt it prudent—wheresoever they were sufficiently at leisure from the passions of the murderous scene—to gather into bodies. This was noticed by the governor of a small Chinese fort, built upon an eminence above the lake; and immediately he threw in a broadside, which spread havoc 40 amongst the Bashkir tribe. As often as the Bashkirs

collected into 'globes' and 'turms', as their only means of meeting the long lines of descending Chinese cavalry—so often did the Chinese governor of the fort pour in his exterminating broadside; until at length the lake, at its lower end, became one vast seething cauldron of human bloodshed and carnage. The Chinese cavalry had reached the foot of the hills: the Bashkirs, attentive to *their* movements, had formed; skirmishes had been fought: and, with a quick sense that the contest was henceforwards rapidly becoming hopeless, the Bashkirs and Kirghises began to retire. The pursuit was not as vigorous as the Kalmuck hatred would have desired. But, at the same time, the very gloomiest hatred could not but find, in their own dreadful experience of the Asiatic deserts, and in the certainty that these wretched Bashkirs had to repeat that same experience a second time, for thousands of miles, as the price exacted by a retributory Providence for their vindictive cruelty—not the very gloomiest of the Kalmucks, or the least reflecting, but found in all this a retaliatory chastisement more complete and absolute than any which their swords and lances could have obtained, or human vengeance have devised.

Here ends the tale of the Kalmuck wanderings in the Desert; for any subsequent marches which awaited them were neither long nor painful. Every possible alleviation and refreshment for their exhausted bodies had been already provided by Kien Long with the most princely munificence; and lands of great fertility were immediately assigned to them in ample extent along the River Ily, not very far from the point at which they had first emerged from the wilderness of Kobi. But the beneficent attention of the Chinese Emperor may be best stated in his own words, as translated into French by one of the Jesuit missionaries:—
 'La nation des Torgotes (savoir les Kalmuques) arriva à Ily, toute delabrée, n'ayant ni de quoi vivre, ni de quoi se vêtir. Je l'avais prévu; et j'avais ordonné de faire en tout genre les provisions nécessaires pour
 pouvoir les secourir promptement: c'est ce qui a été

exécuté. On a fait la division des terres; et on a assigné à chaque famille une portion suffisante pour pouvoir servir à son entretien, soit en la cultivant, soit en y nourrissant des bestiaux. On a donné à chaque particulier des étoffes pour l'habiller, des grains pour se nourrir pendant l'espace d'une année, des ustensiles pour le ménage, et d'autres choses nécessaires : et outre cela plusieurs onces d'argent, pour se pourvoir de ce qu'on aurait pu oublier. On a designé des lieux particuliers, fertiles en pâturages; et on leur a donné des 10 bœufs, moutons, &c., pour qu'ils pussent dans la suite travailler par eux-mêmes à leur entretien et à leur bien-être.'

These are the words of the Emperor himself, speaking in his own person of his own parental cares; but another Chinese, treating the same subject, records the munificence of this prince in terms which proclaim still more forcibly the disinterested generosity which prompted, and the delicate considerateness which conducted this extensive bounty. He has been speaking 20 of the Kalmucks, and he goes on thus:—'Lorsqu'ils arrivèrent sur nos frontières (au nombre de plusieurs centaines de mille), quoique la fatigue extrême, la faim, la soif, et toutes les autres incommodités inséparables d'une très longue et très pénible route en eussent fait périr presque autant, ils étaient réduits à la dernière misère; ils manquaient de tout. Il' (viz, l'Empereur, Kien Long) 'leur fit préparer des logemens conformes à leur manière de vivre; il leur fit distribuer des alimens et des habits; il leur fit donner des bœufs, des 30 moutons, et des ustensiles, pour les mettre en état de former des troupeaux et de cultiver la terre, et tout cela à ses propres frais, qui se sont montés à des sommes immenses, sans compter l'argent qu'il a donné à chaque chef-de-famille, pour pourvoir à la subsistance de sa femme et de ses enfans.'

Thus, after their memorable year of misery, the Kalmucks were replaced in territorial possessions, and in comfort equal perhaps, or even superior, to that which they had enjoyed in Russia, and with superior 40 political advantages. But, if equal or superior, their

condition was no longer the same; if not in degree, their social prosperity had altered in quality; for, instead of being a purely pastoral and vagrant people, they were now in circumstances which obliged them to become essentially dependent upon agriculture; and thus far raised in social rank, that, by the natural course of their habits and the necessities of life, they were effectually reclaimed from roving and from the savage customs connected with a half-nomadic life. They gained also in political privileges, chiefly through the immunity from military service which their new relations enabled them to obtain. These were circumstances of advantage and gain. But one great disadvantage there was, amply to overbalance all other possible gain; the chances were lost or were removed to an incalculable distance for their conversion to Christianity, without which, in these times, there is no absolute advance possible on the path of true civilization.

One word remains to be said upon the *personal* interests concerned in this great drama. The catastrophe in this respect was remarkable and complete. Oubacha, with all his goodness and incapacity of suspecting, had, since the mysterious affair on the banks of the Torgau, felt his mind alienated from his cousin; he revolted from the man that would have murdered him; and he had displayed his caution so visibly as to provoke a reaction in the bearing of Zebek-Dorchi, and a displeasure which all his dissimulation could not hide. This had produced a feud, which, by keeping them aloof, had probably saved the life of Oubacha; for the friendship of Zebek-Dorchi was more fatal than his open enmity. After the settlement on the Ily this feud continued to advance, until it came under the notice of the Emperor, on occasion of a visit which all the Tartar chieftains made to his Majesty at his hunting lodge in 1772. The Emperor informed himself accurately of all the particulars connected with the transaction—of all the rights and claims put forward—and of the way in which they would severally affect the interests

of the Kalmuck people. The consequence was, that he adopted the cause of Oubacha, and repressed the pretensions of Zebek-Dorchi, who, on his part, so deeply resented this discountenance to his ambitious projects, that, in conjunction with other chiefs, he had the presumption even to weave nets of treason against the Emperor himself. Plots were laid, were detected, were baffled; counter-plots were constructed upon the same basis, and with the benefit of the opportunities thus offered. 10

Finally, Zebek-Dorchi was invited to the Imperial lodge, together with all his accomplices; and under the skilful management of the Chinese nobles in the Emperor's establishment, the murderous artifices of these Tartar chieftains were made to recoil upon themselves; and the whole of them perished by assassination at a great Imperial banquet. For the Chinese morality is exactly of that kind which approves in everything the *lex talionis*:—

Lex nec iustior ulla est (as *they* think) 20
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.

So perished Zebek-Dorchi, the author and originator of the great Tartar exodus. Oubacha, meantime, and his people, were gradually recovering from the effects of their misery, and repairing their losses. Peace and prosperity, under the gentle rule of a fatherly lord paramount, redawned upon the tribes: their household *lares*, after so harsh a translation to distant climates, found again a happy reinstatement in what had in fact been their primitive abodes: they found 30 themselves settled in quiet sylvan scenes, rich in all the luxuries of life, and endowed with the perfect loveliness of Arcadian beauty. But from the hills of this favoured land, and even from the level grounds as they approached its western border, they still look out upon that fearful wilderness which once beheld a nation in agony—the utter extirpation of nearly half a million from amongst its numbers, and, for the remainder, a storm of misery so fierce, that in the end (as happened also at Athens during the Pelopon- 40

nesian War, from a different form of misery) very many lost their memory; all records of their past life were wiped out as with a sponge—utterly erased and cancelled: and many others lost their reason; some in a gentle form of pensive melancholy, some in a more restless form of feverish delirium and nervous agitation, and others in the fixed forms of tempestuous mania, raving frenzy, or moping idiocy. Two great commemorative monuments arose in after years to
 10 mark the depth and permanence of the awe—the sacred and reverential grief with which all persons looked back upon the dread calamities attached to the Year of the Tiger—all who had either personally shared in those calamities, and had themselves drunk from that cup of sorrow, or who had effectually been made witnesses to their results, and associated with their relief; two great monuments; one embodied in the religious solemnity, enjoined by the Dalai Lama, called in the Tartar language a *Romanang*—
 20 that is, a national commemoration, with music the most rich and solemn, of all the souls who departed to the rest of Paradise from the afflictions of the Desert: this took place about six years after the arrival in China. Secondly, another more durable and more commensurate to the scale of the calamity and to the grandeur of this national exodus, in the mighty columns of granite and brass, erected by the Emperor Kien Long, near the banks of the Ily: these columns stand upon the very margin of the steppes; and they
 30 bear a short but emphatic inscription to the following effect:—

By the Will of God,
 Here, upon the brink of these Deserts,
 Which from this point begin and stretch away
 Pathless, treeless, waterless
 For thousands of miles—and along the margins of many
 mighty nations,
 Rested from their labours and from great afflictions
 Under the shadow of the Chinese Wall,
 40 And by the favour of KIEN LONG, God's Lieutenant upon
 Earth,

The ancient Children of the Wilderness—the Torgote
Tartars—

Flying before the wrath of the Grecian Czar,
Wandering sheep who had strayed away from the Celestial
Empire in the year 1616,
But are now mercifully gathered again, after infinite sorrow,
Into the fold of their forgiving Shepherd.
Hallowed be the spot for ever,
and
Hallowed be the day—September 8, 1771! 10
Amen.

POSTSCRIPT TO 'THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN'

THERE are some narratives, which, though pure fictions from first to last, counterfeit so vividly the air of grave realities, that, if deliberately offered for such, they would for a time impose upon everybody. In the opposite scale there are other narratives, which, whilst rigorously true, move amongst characters and scenes so remote from our ordinary experience, and through a state of society so favourable to an adventurous cast of incidents, that they would everywhere pass for romances, if severed from the documents which attest their fidelity to facts. In the 10 former class stand the admirable novels of Defoe; and, on a lower range within the same category, the inimitable *Ticar of Wakefield*; upon which last novel, without at all designing it, I once became the author of the following instructive experiment. I had given a copy of this little novel to a beautiful girl of seventeen, the daughter of a statesman in Westmoreland, not designing any deception (nor so much as any concealment) with respect to the fictitious character of the incidents and of the actors in that famous tale. Mere accident it was that had intercepted 20 those explanations as to the extent of fiction in these points which in this case it would have been so natural to make. Indeed, considering the exquisite verisimilitude of the work meeting with such absolute inexperience in the reader, it was almost a duty to have made them. This duty, however, something had caused me to forget; and when next I saw the young mountaineer, I forgot that I *had* forgotten it. Consequently, at first I was perplexed by the unfaltering gravity with which my fair young friend spoke of Dr. Primrose, of Sophia and her sister, of Squire Thornhill, &c., as 30 real and probably living personages, who could sue and be sued. It appeared that this artless young rustic, who had never heard of novels and romances as a bare possibility amongst all the shameless devices of London swindlers, had read with religious fidelity every word of this tale, so

thoroughly life-like, surrendering her perfect faith and her loving sympathy to the different persons in the tale and the natural distresses in which they are involved, without suspecting for a moment that, by so much as a breathing of exaggeration or of embellishment, the pure gospel truth of the narrative could have been sullied. She listened in a kind of breathless stupor to my frank explanation—that not part only, but the whole, of this natural tale was a pure invention. Scorn and indignation flashed from her
10 eyes. She regarded herself as one who had been hoaxed and swindled; begged me to take back the book; and never again, to the end of her life, could endure to look into the book, or to be reminded of that criminal imposture which Dr. Oliver Goldsmith had practised upon her youthful credulity.

In that case, a book altogether fabulous, and not meaning to offer itself for anything else, had been read as genuine history. Here, on the other hand, the adventures of the Spanish Nun, which, in every detail of time and place have
20 since been sifted and authenticated, stood a good chance at one period of being classed as the most lawless of romances. It is, indeed, undeniable, and this arises as a natural result from the bold adventurous character of the heroine, and from the unsettled state of society at that period in Spanish America, that a reader, the most credulous, would at times be startled with doubts upon what seems so unvarying a tenor of danger and lawless violence. But, on the other
30 hand, it is also undeniable that a reader, the most obstinately sceptical, would be equally startled in the very opposite direction, on remarking that the incidents are far from being such as a romance-writer would have been likely to invent; since, if striking, tragic, and even appalling, they are at times repulsive. And it seems evident, that, once putting himself to the cost of a wholesale fiction, the writer would have used his privilege more freely for his own advantage. Whereas the author of these memoirs clearly writes under the coercion and restraint of a notorious reality, that would not suffer him to ignore or to modify the leading facts. Then, as to the objection that few
40 people or none have an experience presenting such uniformity of perilous adventure, a little closer attention shows that the experience in this case is *not* uniform; and so far otherwise, that a period of several years in Kate's South American life is confessedly suppressed; and on no other ground whatever, than that this long parenthesis is *not* adventurous, not essentially differing from the monotonous character of ordinary Spanish life.

Suppose the case, therefore, that Kate's memoirs had been thrown upon the world with no vouchers for their authenticity beyond such internal presumptions as would have occurred to thoughtful readers, when reviewing the entire succession of incidents, I am of opinion that the person best qualified by legal experience to judge of evidence would finally have pronounced a favourable award; since it is easy to understand, that in a world so vast as the Peru, the Mexico, the Chili, of Spaniards during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and under the slender modification of Indian manners as yet effected by the Papal Christianization of these countries, and in the neighbourhood of a river-system so awful—of a mountain-system so unheard-of in Europe, there would probably, by blind, unconscious sympathy, grow up a tendency to lawless and gigantesque ideals of adventurous life; under which, united with the duelling code of Europe, many things would become trivial and commonplace experiences that to us home-bred English ('qui musas colimus severiores') seem monstrous and revolting. 10

Left, therefore, to itself, *my* belief is, that the story of the Military Nun would have prevailed finally against the demurs of the sceptics. However, in the meantime, all such demurs were suddenly and *officially* silenced for ever. Soon after the publication of Kate's memoirs, in what you may call an early stage of her *literary* career, though two centuries after her *personal* career had closed, a regular controversy arose upon the degree of credit due to these extraordinary confessions (such they may be called) of the poor conscience-haunted nun. Whether these in Kate's original MS. were 30 entitled 'Autobiographic Sketches', or 'Selections Grave and Gay', from the military experiences of a Nun, or possibly 'The Confessions of a Biscayan Fire-Eater', is more than I know. No matter: confessions they were; and confessions that, when at length published, were absolutely mobbed and hustled by a gang of misbelieving (i. e. *miscreant*) critics. And this fact is most remarkable, that the person who originally headed the incredulous party, viz., Señor de Ferrer, a learned Castilian, was the very same who finally authenticated, by *documentary* evidence. 40 the extraordinary narrative in those parts which had most of all invited scepticism. The progress of the dispute threw the decision at length upon the archives of the Spanish Marine. Those for the southern ports of Spain had been transferred, I believe, from Cadiz and St. Lucar to Seville; chiefly, perhaps, through the confusions incident to the two French invasions of Spain in our own

day (first, that under Napoleon ; secondly, that under the Duc d'Angoulême). Amongst these archives, subsequently amongst those of Cuzco in South America ; thirdly, amongst the records of some royal courts in Madrid ; fourthly, by collateral proof from the Papal Chancery ; fifthly, from Barcelona—have been drawn together ample attestations of all the incidents recorded by Kate. The elopement from St. Sebastian's, the doubling of Cape Horn, the shipwreck on the coast of Peru, the rescue of the royal banner from
 10 the Indians of Chili, the fatal duel in the dark, the astonishing passage of the Andes, the tragical scenes at Tucuman and Cuzco, the return to Spain in obedience to a royal and a papal summons, the visit to Rome and the interview with the Pope—finally, the return to South America, and the mysterious disappearance at Vera Cruz, upon which no light was ever thrown—all these capital heads of the narrative have been established beyond the reach of scepticism : and, in consequence, the story was soon after adopted as historically established, and was reported at length by journals
 20 of the highest credit in Spain and Germany, and by a Parisian journal so cautious and so distinguished for its ability as the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

I must not leave the impression upon my readers, that this complex body of documentary evidences has been searched and appraised by myself. Frankly I acknowledge that, on the sole occasion when any opportunity offered itself for such a labour, I shrank from it as too fatiguing—and also as superfluous ; since, if the proofs had satisfied the compatriots of Catalina, who came to the investigation
 30 with hostile feelings of partisanship, and not dissembling their incredulity, armed also (and in Mr. de Ferrer's case conspicuously armed) with the appropriate learning for giving effect to this incredulity—it could not become a stranger to suppose himself qualified for disturbing a judgment that had been so deliberately delivered. Such a tribunal of native Spaniards being satisfied, there was no further opening for demur. The ratification of poor Kate's memoirs is now therefore to be understood as absolute, and without reserve.

40 This being stated—viz., such an attestation from competent authorities to the truth of Kate's narrative, as may save all readers from my fair Westmoreland friend's disaster—it remains to give such an answer, as without further research *can* be given, to a question pretty sure of arising in all reflective readers' thoughts—viz., Does there anywhere survive a portrait of Kate ? I answer—and it would be both mortifying and perplexing if I could *not*—Yes. One

such portrait there is confessedly ; and seven years ago this was to be found at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the collection of Herr Sempeller. The name of the artist I am not able to report ; neither can I say whether Herr Sempeller's collection still remains intact, and remains at Aix-la-Chapelle.

But inevitably to most readers who review the circumstances of a case so extraordinary, it will occur, that beyond a doubt *many* portraits of the adventurous nun must have been executed. To have affronted the wrath of the Inquisition, and to have survived such an audacity, would of itself ¹⁰ be enough to found a title for the martial nun to a national interest. It is true that Kate had not taken the veil ; she had stopped short of the deadliest crime known to the Inquisition ; but still her transgressions were such as to require a special indulgence ; and this indulgence was granted by a pope to the intercession of a king—the greatest then reigning. It was a favour that could not have been asked by any greater man in this world, nor granted by any less. Had no other distinction settled upon Kate, this would have been enough to fix the gaze ²⁰ of her own nation. But her whole life constituted Kate's supreme distinction. There can be no doubt, therefore, that, from the year 1624 (i.e., the last year of our James I), she became the object of an admiration in her own country that was almost idolatrous. And this admiration was not of a kind that rested upon any partisan schism amongst her countrymen. So long as it was kept alive by her bodily presence amongst them, it was an admiration equally aristocratic and popular, shared alike by the rich and the poor—by the lofty and the humble. Great, therefore, ³⁰ would be the demand for her portrait. There is a tradition that Velasquez, who had in 1623 executed a portrait of Charles I (then Prince of Wales), was amongst those who in the three or four following years ministered to this demand. It is believed also, that, in travelling from Genoa and Florence to Rome, she sat to various artists, in order to meet the interest about herself already rising amongst the cardinals and other dignitaries of the Romish Church. It is probable, therefore, that numerous pictures of Kate are yet lurking both in Spain and Italy, but not known ⁴⁰ as such. For, as the public consideration granted to her had grown out of merits and qualities purely personal, and was kept alive by no local or family memorials rooted in the land, or surviving herself, it was inevitable that, as soon as she herself died, all identification of her portraits would perish : and the portraits would thenceforwards be confounded with the similar memorials, past all numbering,

which every year accumulates as the wrecks from remembrances of generations that are passing & that are fading or faded, that are dying or buried; well, therefore, amongst so many irrecoverable in the portrait at Aix-la-Chapelle, we still possess a doubted representation (and therefore in some means for identifying *other* representations) of so memorably adorned by nature; gifted with so unparalleled both of doing and suffering; 10 a life so stormy, and perished by a fate so mysterious.

DE QUINCEY'S NOTES

THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN

PAGE 23.

11. *Mrs. Bobo.* Who is Mrs. Bobo? The reader will say, 'I know not Bobo.' Possibly; but for all that, Bobo is known to *sexates*. From the American Senate Bobo received the amplest testimonials of merits that have not yet been matched. In the debate on William Nevins's claim for the extension of his patent for a machine that rolls and cuts crackers and biscuits, thus spoke Mr. Adams, a most distinguished Senator, against Mr. Badger:—'It is said this is a discovery of the patentee for making the best biscuits. Now, if it be so, he must have got his invention from Mrs. Bobo of Alabama, for she certainly makes better biscuits than anybody in the world. I can prove by my friend from Alabama (Mr. Clay), who sits beside me, and by any man who ever stayed at Mrs. Bobo's house, that she makes better biscuit than anybody else in the world; and if this man has the best plan for making biscuit, he must have got it from *her*.' Henceforward I hope we know where to apply for biscuit.

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13. *she looked, &c.* If ever the reader should visit Aix-la-Chapelle, he will probably feel interest enough in the poor, wild impassioned girl, to look out for a picture of her in that city, and the only one known *certainly* to be authentic. It is in the collection of Mr. Sempeller. For some time it was supposed that the best (if not the only) portrait of her lurked somewhere in Italy. Since the discovery of the picture at Aix-la-Chapelle, that notion has been abandoned. But there is great reason to believe that, both in Madrid and Rome, many portraits of her must have been painted to meet the intense interest which arose in her history subsequently amongst all men of rank, military or ecclesiastical, whether in Italy or Spain. The date of these would range between sixteen and twenty-two years from the period which we have now reached (1608).

PAGE 33.

19. *Alférez*. This rank in the Spanish army is, or was, on a level with the modern *sous-lieutenant* of France.

PAGE 39.

29. '*holding children from their play*,' &c. The beautiful words of Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defense of Poesie*.

PAGE 51.

2. *earthly vineyards*. Though not exactly in the same circumstances as Kate, or sleeping, *à la belle étoile*, on a declivity of the Andes, I have known (or heard circumstantially reported) the cases of many ladies, besides Kate, who were in precisely the same critical danger of perishing for the want of a little brandy. A dessert spoonful or two would have saved them. Avaunt! you wicked 'Temperance' medallist! repent as fast as ever you can, or perhaps the next time we hear of you, *anasarca* and *hydro-thorax* will be running after you, to punish your shocking excesses in water. Seriously, the case is one of constant recurrence, and constantly ending fatally from *unseasonable* and pedantic rigour of temperance. Dr. Darwin, the famous author of *Zoonomia*, *The Botanical Garden*, &c., sacrificed his life to the very pedantry and superstition of temperance by refusing a glass of brandy in obedience to a system, at a moment when (according to the opinion of all around him) one single glass would have saved his life. The fact is, that the medical profession composes the most generous and liberal body of men amongst us; taken generally, by much the most enlightened; but professionally, the most timid. Want of boldness in the administration of opium, &c., though they can be bold enough with mercury, is their besetting infirmity. And from this infirmity females suffer most. One instance I need hardly mention, the fatal case of an august lady, mourned by nations, with respect to whom it was, and is, the belief of multitudes to this hour (well able to judge) that she would have been saved by a glass of brandy; and her chief medical attendant, Sir R. C., who shot himself, came to think so too late—too late for her, and too late for himself. Amongst many cases of the same nature, which personally I have been acquainted with, thirty years ago, a man, illustrious for his intellectual accomplishments,¹ mentioned to me that his own wife, during her first or second confinement, was suddenly reported to him, by one of her female attendants (who slipped

¹ On second thoughts, I see no reason for scrupling to mention that this man was Robert Southey.

away unobserved by the medical people), as undoubtedly sinking fast. He hurried to her chamber, and *saw* that it was so. On this he suggested earnestly some stimulant—laudanum or alcohol. The presiding medical authority, however, was inexorable. 'Oh, by no means,' shaking his ambrosial wig; 'any stimulant at this crisis would be fatal.' But no authority could overrule the concurrent testimony of all symptoms, and of all unprofessional opinions. By some pious falsehood my friend smuggled the doctor out of the room, and immediately smuggled a glass of brandy into the poor lady's lips. She recovered as if under the immediate afflatus of magic, so sudden was her recovery and so complete. The doctor is now dead, and went to his grave under the delusive persuasion that not any vile glass of brandy, but the stern refusal of all brandy, was the thing that saved his collapsing patient. The patient herself, who might naturally know something of the matter, was of a different opinion. She sided with the factious body around her bed (comprehending all, beside the doctor) who felt sure that death was rapidly approaching, *barring* that brandy. The same result in the same appalling crisis, I have known repeatedly produced by twenty-five drops of laudanum. Many will say 'Oh, never listen to a non-medical man like this writer. Consult in such cases your medical adviser.' You will, will you? Then let me tell you that you are missing the very logic of all I have been saying for the improvement of blockheads, which is—that you should consult any man *but* a medical man, since no other man has any obstinate prejudice of professional timidity.

PAGE 53.

2. *Creole*. At that time the infusion of negro or African blood was small. Consequently none of the negro hideousness was diffused. After those intercomplexities had risen between all complications and interweavings of descent from three original strands—European, American, African—the distinctions of social consideration founded on them bred names so many that a court calendar was necessary to keep you from blundering. As yet (i.e. in Kate's time), the varieties were few. Meantime, the word *Creole* has always been misapplied in our English colonies to a person (though of strict European blood) simply if *born* in the West Indies. In this English use the word *Creole* expresses exactly the same difference as the Romans indicated by *Hispanus* and *Hispanicus*. The first meant a person of Spanish blood, a native of Spain; the second a Roman born in Spain. So of *Germanus* and *Germanicus*, *Italicus* and *Italicus*, *Anglus* and

Anglicus, &c.; an important distinction, on which see Isaac Casaubon *apud Scriptores Hist. Augustan.*

31. *once through Jews.* It is well known that the very reason why the Spanish, beyond all nations, became so gloomily jealous of a Jewish cross in the pedigree, was because until the vigilance of the cross rose into ferocity, in no nation was such a cross so common. The hatred of fear is ever the deepest, and men hated the Jewish taint, as once in Jerusalem they hated the leprosy, because even while they raved against it, the secret proofs of it might be detected amongst their own kindred; even as in the Temple, whilst once an Hebrew king rose in mutiny against the priesthood (2 Chronicles xxvi. 16-20) suddenly the leprosy that dethroned him blazed out upon his forehead.

PAGE 72.

26. *episcopal.* The roads around Cuzco were made, and maintained, under the patronage and control of the bishop.

PAGE 76.

10. '*sweet as summer.*' Griffith in Shakespeare, when vindicating, in that immortal scene with Queen Catharine, Cardinal Wolsey.

REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

PAGE 105.

28. *accompaniment of women.* Singular it is, and not generally known, that Grecian women accompanied the *anabasis* of the younger Cyrus and the subsequent Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Xenophon affirms that there were 'many' women in the Greek army—πολλαὶ ἦσαν ἑταῖραι ἐν τῷ στρατεύματι; and in a late stage of that trying expedition it is evident that women were amongst the survivors.

PAGE 111.

7. '*trashed.*' This is an expressive word used by Beaumont and Fletcher in their *Bonduca*, &c., to describe the case of a person retarded and embarrassed in flight, or in pursuit, by some encumbrance, whether thing or person, too valuable to be left behind.

PAGE 113.

38. *the Feka-Zechorr.* There is another *ouloss* equally strong with that of Feka-Zechorr, viz., that of Erkelunn, under the government of Assarcho and Machi, whom some obligations of treaty or other hidden motives drew into the general conspiracy of revolt. But fortunately the two chieftains found means to assure the Governor of Astrachan, on the first outbreak of the insurrection, that their real wishes were for maintaining the old connexion with Russia. The Cossacks, therefore, to whom the pursuit was intrusted, had instructions to act cautiously and according to circumstances on coming up with them. The result was, through the prudent management of Assarcho, that the clan, without compromising their pride or independence, made such moderate submissions as satisfied the Cossacks; and eventually both chiefs and people received from the Czarina the rewards and honours of exemplary fidelity.

PAGE 126.

26. *the very margin of the vast central deserts of Asia.* All the circumstances are learned from a long state paper upon the subject of this Kalmuck migration, drawn up in the Chinese language by the Emperor himself. Parts of this paper have been translated by the Jesuit missionaries. The Emperor states the whole motives of his conduct and the chief incidents at great length.

PAGE 127.

27. *camels 'indorsed'.* 'And elephants indorsed with towers,' Milton in *Paradise Regained*.

PAGE 136.

30. *inscription.* This inscription has been slightly altered in one or two phrases, and particularly in adapting to the Christian era the Emperor's expressions for the year of the original exodus from China and the retrogressive exodus from Russia. With respect to the designation adopted from the Russian Emperor, either it is built upon some confusion between him and the Byzantine Caesars, as though the former, being of the same religion with the latter (and occupying in part the same longitudes, though in different latitudes), might be considered as his modern successor; or else it refers simply to the Greek form of Christianity professed by the Russian Emperor and Church.

EDITOR'S NOTES

THE SPANISH MILITARY NUN

[De Quincey's account of the adventures of Catalina de Erauso appeared first in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1847, under the title of *The Nautico-Military Nun*, and was reprinted in the third volume of the Edinburgh Edition of his collected works, with the title changed to its present form, and a few minor alterations. De Quincey's version of the story was based on an article that appeared in 1847 in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, by Alexis de Valon. Catalina's autobiography has recently been translated, with introduction and notes, by Mr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly (*The Nun-Ensign*, Fisher Unwin), who considers that the *History* as we now have it represents a compilation by a later hand of the original memoirs written by Catalina herself.]

PAGE 3. 4. *hidalgo*. Nobleman. *Hijo de algo*=son of something.

24. *terrae filius*. Son of the soil, i.e., here, of a peasant mother.

PAGE 4. 2. *Cortés*. Conqueror of Mexico, 1519-21.

Pizarro. Conqueror of Peru, 1532-3.

9. *Don*. Spanish title, formerly confined to noblemen, but now corresponding to Mr.

PAGE 5. 4. *crocodile*. From the fable that the crocodile wept while devouring a man, crocodile's tears have become proverbial for hypocritical sorrow.

10. *cynic*. The Cynics were a sect of philosophers in ancient Greece who despised wealth and pleasure. The word is now used to denote one who disbelieves in the sincerity of human actions. In the present passage it is used to mean one who distrusts human hopes. De Quincey is the cynic, who disbelieves that the plans for Catalina's future will turn out as her father and the nuns imagine.

PAGE 6. 32. *fec-simile*. Absolute possession.

33. 'to hate and to hold.' From the *Marriage Service*.

PAGE 7. 2. '*determine.*' Come to an end.

3. *châteaux en Espagne.* The phrase referred to building castles in a foreign country where one has no standing ground, and so is used of any baseless hopes of the future.

7. *Spanish constitutions.* An allusion to the Carlist wars and to the revolutions and counter-revolutions in Spain during the middle of the nineteenth century. But De Quincey's disparaging remarks here and in the previous section about Spanish 'pride', 'laziness', and 'ostentatious mendacity', are a piece of side play to the gallery of sixty years ago, which has now happily gone out of fashion: they strike a solitary note in an article otherwise full of good humour and charity.

34. '*blue rejoicing sky.*' Coleridge, *France*, 17.

38. *golden tales.* Of the conquest of America.

PAGE 8. 8. *Marfisa or Bradamant.* Two warrior ladies in *Orlando Furioso*, by the Italian poet Ariosto, 1474-1533.

Britomart. A warrior lady in the *Fæerie Queene* (Canto III).

24. *breviary.* The Roman Catholic book of prayers and lessons for each day. '*scrutoire.*' Writing-desk, *écritoire*.

32. *trousseau.* Bunch.

PAGE 9. 17. *hoc age.* Do this.

PAGE 10. 9. *a priori.* Arguing from the cause to the effect.

17. *Jack Ketch.* Executioner in the reign of James II.

18. '*Mr. Calcraft.*' Public Executioner 1829-74.

27. *ricas.* Hurrahs. Literally, *Viva* means 'May you live'.

34. *short-lived.* In Spain.

37. '*shilly-shally.*' Indecision.

PAGE 11. 6. *nankcen.* Cotton cloth, first imported from Nankin.

26. *at the back of beyond.* In an indefinite out-of-the-way place. The first instance of the use of this expression given by the *New English Dictionary* is by Scott in *The Antiquary*.

33. *cordials.* Sweetened and scented spirits.

PAGE 12. 6. *casuistry.* Reasoning by which cases of conscience are decided. Generally applied to a quibbling way of dealing with difficult cases of duty.

26. *Wellington trousers:* i.e., they were wide. The term was used for trousers under which were worn Wellington boots, named after the Duke of Wellington.

32. *Vittoria.* The scene of Wellington's victory over the French in 1813.

38. *as light-heartedly as the Duke.* Who had a well-arranged commissariat at Vittoria.

PAGE 13. 10. *owned the soft impeachment*. Acknowledged the truth of the pleasing charge (Sheridan, *The Rivals*, v. iii). Here, however, there is no charge; but a suggestion that the uncle is interested in Latin.

13. *uncular*. De Quincey's humorous abbreviation for avuncular.

25. *frequentative, inceptive, desiderative*. Grammatical terms for verbs expressing frequency, beginning, and desire of action.

32. *Thiébault*. A French writer, 1733-1807. The incident is referred to in *Mes Souvenirs de Vingt Ans de Séjour à Berlin*, vol. ii, p. 319.

36-8. *ennuyois, ennuye*. The modern forms are *ennuyais* and *ennuie*.

PAGE 14. 8. *qualified right*. In virtue of 'tips'.

33. *alguazils*. Police.

PAGE 16. 41. *visitor*. In the sense of inspector.

PAGE 17. 23. *a Frenchman . . . 'Chance . . .'* Valon, in the article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, says '*Le hasard, a dit quelqu'un, c'est peut-être le pseudonyme de Dieu, quand il ne veut pas signer*'. '*Quelqu'un*' is Chamfort (1741-94), whose actual words were '*Le hasard est un sobriquet de la Providence*'.

30. *imperialists*. Portmanteaus.

Juvenal's qualification. '*Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*' (*Satires*, x. 22), which has been translated:

'The empty traveller may whistle
Before the robber and his pistol.'

PAGE 18. 10. *apodeictically*. By proof that makes clear beyond doubt.

PAGE 19. 20. *carnally deaf*. Deaf to all that concerned their senses.

27. *Andalusian*. Andalusia was one of the old divisions of Spain, in the south-west.

34. *philogarlic*. Fond of garlic.

PAGE 21. 3. *Catholic Majesty*. His Most Catholic Majesty is a title of the kings of Spain, as His Most Christian Majesty was of the kings of France. Cf. the title of *Fidei Defensor*, borne by the kings of England.

4. *Lloyd's*. An association of persons that transact marine insurance, so-called because those engaged in this business (which is now carried on in the Royal Exchange) used to meet at Lloyd's Coffee House.

31. *ducats and pistoles*. Gold coins worth respectively about 9s. and 17s.

34. '*flotsam*.' Such part of the wreckage of a ship as was found floating on the water.

36. '*jetsam*.' Goods thrown overboard to lighten a ship and afterwards washed ashore.

39. *8ro*. Octavo is a term to denote a particular size of book or page. Here it is used for the book itself—Catalina's memoirs.

PAGE 22. 36. *horoscope*. An observation of the heavens at a person's birth, to foretell his future. Here used of the good fortune that—as inferred from her escape—her horoscope would have revealed.

PAGE 23. 2. *sortilege*. This can only be applied strictly to deciding one's action or foretelling the future by drawing lots.

11. *Mrs. Bobo*. A celebrated maker of biscuits, in Alabama.

14. *caput mortuum*. Worthless remains.

21. *Catholic*. See p. 21, l. 3.

29. *juste milieu*. Happy mean.

PAGE 24. 14. *cabalgador*. Cavalier.

26. *Trujillo*. Truxillo.

PAGE 25. 11. *on the opposite side of the equation*. What was running in De Quincey's mind was something like this:— 'It makes one think of a list of customers—the good payers in the left column, the bad in the right; and reminds one of an equation, since taking a quantity over to the opposite side changes its sign.'

13. *no credit*. The mathematical critic may object that 'no' credit is not on the opposite side of an equation to 'unlimited' credit, the latter being an infinite positive quantity, whereas the least possible amount of credit is zero.

21. *which even annuity offices utter without a pang*: i.e., which in Spain is a customary greeting even from the clerk in an insurance office that has to pay an annuity till one's death.

PAGE 26. 7. *no sort of pecuniary difference*. Only on the assumption that they were equally ready or unready to pay their accounts.

38. *Corregidor*. Magistrate.

PAGE 28. 30. *pasha*. Turkish governor. His rank used to be shown by the number of horse tails on his standard.

PAGE 29. 21. '*Sound the trumpets! Beat the drums!*' Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, 41.

38. *architrave*. The top beam of a doorway.

PAGE 30. 14. *muffling*. Oars are muffled by wrapping cloth or other material round them to deaden the sound of their rattling in the rowlocks.

37. '*Catalinam vehis, et fortunas eius.*' 'You carry Catalina and her fortunes.' The phrase was used by Caesar, who believed in his good genius, to encourage the captain of a boat anxious to turn back to port on account of a storm (Plutarch, *Life of Caesar*).

PAGE 31. 34. *tap*. Dropsy is relieved by drawing off with a syringe the water that collects in the body.

PAGE 33. 29. '*prescribed.*' Became invalid by lapse of time.

39. *ultrascenical*. Too theatrical to be credible. Cf. p. 83, l. 1, and p. 107, l. 14.

PAGE 35. 38. *cordilleras*. Chains of mountains.

PAGE 36. 1. *Dorado*. El Dorado was a district of fabulous wealth long believed to exist in the northern part of South America.

39. *antiseptic*. Preventing decay.

PAGE 37. 25. *hectic*. Feverish glow.

PAGE 38. 26. *tirailleur's*. Rifleman's.

PAGE 39. 26. *Cain*. Genesis iv. 12-15.

Wandering Jew. A legendary character doomed to wander from land to land for having struck Christ when he was being led to Golgotha.

27. '*pass like night from land to land.*' Coleridge, *Ancient Mariner*, 588.

29. '*holding children from their play, and old men from the chimney corner.*' From Sir Philip Sidney's description of the power of the poet, in his *Apologie for Poetrie*.

37. *loved him best*. There is no mention of this in the *Ancient Mariner*.

PAGE 40. 1. *Nemesis*. The Spirit of Vengeance.

PAGE 42. 4. *a Frenchman*. Valon.

PAGE 44. 26. *theodolite*. An instrument for measuring angles.

spirit-level. An instrument for finding a level. It consists of a tube containing spirit, with a bubble that comes to the centre when the tube is level.

PAGE 45. 36. *arrears of the road.* Arrears mean literally things *behind*; thence an account not paid; and so here parts of the road not yet covered—in *front*. Cf. p. 7, l. 29, and p. 46, l. 10.

PAGE 46. 1. *ratify itself.* Be confirmed.

PAGE 47. 19. *golden plummet.* A plummet is a piece of lead attached to a string, to measure depth. *Golden*, because the news learnt from the imaginary plummet is so precious.

PAGE 48. 3. *winged patriarchal herald.* An allusion to the dove sent out from the Ark that returned with an olive leaf, showing that the Flood had abated. Genesis viii. 11.

11. *grazed.* To graze in this sense is to touch lightly in passing. Catalina's position was so critical that she was going along a line that, as it were, touched safety on one side and destruction on the other.

21. *city of refuge.* The Israelites had certain cities where criminals could take refuge and avoid arrest. Cf. 'right of asylum', p. 35, l. 13.

PAGE 49. 22. *Angelus.* Strictly, the Roman Catholic prayer that is said at dawn, noon, and sunset, at the sound of a bell. Often, as here, the bell itself.

PAGE 50. 2. *St. Bernard's hospice.* A monastery in the Alps, founded by St. Bernard of Menthon in about 962, that 'gives hospitality' to travellers.

6. *silvery column.* The mercury in a barometer or thermometer.

9. *the river of the American St. Peter.* One would expect 'the American river of St. Peter' (the Minnesota, a tributary of the Mississippi).

24. *golden Christian signal.* 'Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath.' Eph. iv. 26.

31. *The simple truth was, &c.* The sentence is incomplete, as there is no complement to 'was'. This is not the only instance in De Quincey's writings of his becoming so interested in a subordinate idea that he forgets to close the principal clause.

35. *Captain Bunsby's.* 'If so be as he's dead, my opinion is he won't come back no more. If so be as he's alive, my opinion is he will. Do I say he will? No! Why not? Because the bearings of this observation lays in the application on it.' Dickens, *Dombey and Son*, xxxix.

PAGE 51. 16. *scalpers*. There is no evidence that the Peruvian Indians—who were a very gentle race—practised scalping.

17. *legend of ancient days*. De Quincey seems to have in mind the story of Jason (and one similar about Cadmus), who, having killed a dragon, sowed its teeth in the ground, whence sprang up armed men ready to fight him.

24. *aiguillette*. A tag suspended from the shoulder of military and naval uniforms.

PAGE 52. 2. *caballero*. Cavalier.

3. *bridle-hand*. The hand that holds the reins—the left.

17. '*written strange defeatures in her face*.' Shakespeare, *Comedy of Errors*, v. i. 300.

PAGE 53. 2. *Creole*. Generally used now of persons born in the West Indies of European parents.

26. *voluptuousness*. Love of pleasure.

29. *Goths*. A German people who founded a kingdom in Spain which lasted from the fifth to the eighth century.

Vandals. A confederacy of German peoples who invaded Spain in the fifth century and founded the kingdom of Andalusia, but were afterwards defeated and scattered by the Goths.

31. *Arabs*. Arab seems to be used loosely for Semitic.

Moors. Invaded Spain in the eighth century, defeated the Gothic king, and exercised dominion for nearly 800 years, until the fall of Granada in 1492.

32. *Jeics*. Settled in Spain and frequently intermarried with Spaniards.

41. *Miranda . . . Ferdinand*. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, i. ii and iii. i.

PAGE 54. 8. *Visigothic*. The Goths were divided into Ostrogoths in the east, and Visigoths in the west.

22. *such things*. Shakespeare, *Othello*, i. iii. 128, &c.

32. *King of the Spains*. A title current in De Quincey's time, dating from the union of Castile and Aragon.

PAGE 55. 32. '*Tin*.' Slang for money.

35. *of two worlds*. See p. 53, ll. 16-17.

PAGE 56. 7. *circumstantial*. Full of circumstance (pomp). Contrast p. 124, l. 6, for the usual sense.

14. *one reporter*. Valon.

Ferrer's narrative. The edition of Catalina's memoirs issued by Ferrer in 1829.

23. *Helots*. Original inhabitants of Laconia, who were enslaved by the Spartans.

PAGE 57. 1. *doctoring dice*. Dice are doctored or 'loaded' by having lead inserted to make them fall with a particular face uppermost.

PAGE 59. 12. *buzzigs*. Persons wearing buzz wigs—the judges and lawyers. Buzz is only found in this sense as an epithet of a large bushy wig. Cf. Serjeant Buzfuz in *The Pickwick Papers*.

27. *Pythias . . . Damon*. (Pythias should be Phintias.) Proverbial as an example of friendship. Phintias was condemned to death for plotting against Dionysius I, King of Syracuse. He obtained leave of absence to arrange his domestic affairs on condition that, if he did not return in time, his friend Damon should be killed instead. Dionysius was so struck by the devotion of the two friends that he pardoned Phintias and asked to be admitted to their friendship.

PAGE 60. 2. *Jack Cade's chimney*. See Shakespeare, *Henry the Sixth, Second Part*, IV. ii. 160.

8. *chopping logic*. Advancing quibbling arguments.

PAGE 61. 30. *derotational confession*. So as to receive absolution. A priest is not permitted to divulge any secrets told under the seal of confession.

PAGE 62. 20. *La Plata*. Now Sucre, capital of Bolivia.

39. *Eminencies, Excellencies, Highnesses, Holinesses*. Titles applied respectively to Cardinals, Ambassadors, Princes, and the Pope.

PAGE 63. 4. *peripet[te]sia*. The sudden change of circumstances on which the plot of a tragedy turns.

8. *Claude Lorraine*. Claude Gellée, known as Claude of Lorraine, a French landscape painter, 1600-82.

PAGE 64. 12. *prosperous*. *Paz* means peace.

31. *Alcalde*. Mayor.

PAGE 65. 24. *reversionary*. To come to them later. Cf. p. 112, l. 26.

PAGE 66. 14. *allegory*. Used loosely for 'symbol'.

36. *Cinderellula*. A too small Cinderella. -ula is a common termination in Spanish for what are termed in grammar Diminutives.

PAGE 68. 7. *renta*. Inn.

10. *locanda*. Inn (Italian).

21. *a repeating echo of Don Quixote*. One who talked in the same stilted way as Don Quixote. The First Part of *Don Quixote* was published in 1605.

PAGE 69. 6. *pantomime*. Dumb show.

21. *an iota*. The smallest particular. The name of the smallest letter (*i*) in the Greek alphabet.

PAGE 71. 11. *besides her torrent bath*. Besides the fact that she was cold from her torrent bath.

PAGE 72. 16. *lost his worship any bet*. He would have been disqualified as acting in an unsportsmanlike way.

19. *en croupe*. Riding behind.

26. *episcopal*. The roads round Cuzco were under the control of the bishop.

41. *pomoerium*. The open space round a Roman camp.

PAGE 75. 18. *St. Peter's*. The Pope, as representative of St. Peter, is the custodian of the keys of heaven (Matt. xvi. 19).

30. *forty myriads*. 400,000. A myriad is strictly 10,000, but is generally used of a countless number.

PAGE 76. 2. *Conde*. Count.

4. *Duke of Buckingham*. Visited Spain in 1623 with the Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles I) in the hope of arranging a marriage between the latter and the Infanta.

10. '*sweet as summer*.' Shakespeare, *Henry the Eighth*, iv. ii. 56.

12. *the King*. Philip IV.

16. *a pension*. 800 *escudos*, equivalent to about £80, of which the purchasing power at that time was very much greater than it is now.

18. *year of jubilee*. A year recurring at stated intervals, during which those who made a pilgrimage to Rome could obtain a remission of punishment for their sins.

31. *chair of St. Peter*. See p. 75, l. 18.

PAGE 77. 1. *final arcenger*. Romans xii. 19.

7. *in partibus infidelium*. In heathen countries.

11. *ninth part of a word*. An allusion to the proverb 'Nine tailors make a man'.

36. *Finis*. End. Until quite recently it was the custom to print this word at the end of all books.

PAGE 78. 6. *that secret*. In this account of Catalina's end De Quincey has followed Valon, who says that probably she fell overboard, was drowned, and was eaten by a shark. However, Ferrer's edition of the *Historia* establishes the fact that in 1645—fifteen years later—she was still at Vera Cruz, following the trade of a carrier. It is after this date that she disappears, according to J.-M. de Heredia (*La Nonne Alferez*, Lamerre, Paris, 1894), who recounts three suppositions of her end: that she died in her bed; that she was

killed by robbers; that she was spirited away by the Devil. Finally Mr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly gives chapter and verse for the fact that she died in 1650, at Cuitlaxtla, and was buried with pomp.

REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

[The *Revolt of the Tartars* first appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1837, and was reprinted with a few minor alterations in the fourth volume of the Edinburgh Edition. De Quincey based his version of the event on the account given by the German traveller Bergmann, in *Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmüken in den Jahren 1802 und 1808*. An authoritative account of the flight is contained in a Chinese state paper, written by the Emperor Kien Long himself, of which a French translation is given in *Mémoires concernant les Chinois*, published by the missionaries of Peking in 1776.]

PAGE 81. *Kalmuck*. The Kalmucks—also known as Torgouts—were a Tartar tribe. In 1616 (according to Bergmann, whom De Quincey follows, but probably about seventy years later) they had left the protection of the Chinese Emperor, arrived on the banks of the Volga, and placed themselves under the protection of Russia.

Khan. Prince.

6. *latter half of the last century*. 1770-1.

7. *terminus a quo*. Goal from which they started
terminus ad quem. Goal to which they went.

20. *lemming*. A migratory mouse.

25. *solitary hand*. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 139.

PAGE 82. 15. *Venice Preserved . . . Fiesco*. Two tragedies—the first by Otway, 1682; the second by Schiller, 1783—whose plots turn on political conspiracies.

21. *Cambyses*. King of Persia, 529-522 B.C.

anabasis of the younger Cyrus. 'March inland' (opposite to *katabasis*, 'march back': see below) against Artaxerxes, King of Persia, in 401 B.C.

24. *Crassus*. Defeated and killed by the Parthians at Carrhae in 53 B.C.

Julian. 'The Apostate,' Emperor of Rome, defeated and killed by the Parthians in A.D. 363.

27. *Russian anabasis and katabasis of Napoleon*. The Moscow Campaign of 1812.

40. *personal agencies*. Probably De Quincey exaggerates these, and ignores causes of a general nature, especially

the harsh and extortionate rule of Russia. See, e.g., Masson's Appendix in vol. vii of the Collective Edition of De Quincey's works published by Messrs. Black (p. 423).

PAGE 83. 1. *scenical*. Cf. p. 33, l. 39, and p. 107, l. 14.
41. *nationality*. Consciousness of forming a nation.

PAGE 85. 7. *rival*—almost a competitor. Strictly, rivals are owners of opposite sides of a river, with an equal claim to fish, driftage, &c. A competitor is one who is trying to get the same prize as another.

24. *Machiavelian*. The name of Machiavelli, the Italian writer, 1469–1527, has become proverbial for duplicity from the maxims of government advocated in his book *The Prince*.

33. *the choice*. Of Oubacha as Khan.

34. *Elizabeth Petrowna*. Empress of Russia, 1741–61. Daughter of Peter the Great. She took part in the Seven Years' War against Frederick the Great, and her army entered Berlin. She founded Moscow University.

PAGE 86. 7. *sixty-five tents*. About 400 people.

40. *roubles*. A rouble is worth about two shillings.

PAGE 88. 15. *behemoth*. A huge animal, supposed to be the hippopotamus, described in Job xl. 15.

Muscovy. Russia.

17. '*lion ramp*.' Lion's spring. Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, l. 139.

18. '*baptized and infidel*.' Milton, *Paradise Lost*, l. 582.

20. '*barbaric East*.' Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ll. 3–4.

21. *monstrous*. Unnatural.

26. *fable*. Story.

PAGE 89. 21. *in that view*. Having regard only to distance.

27. *head of their religion*. The Dalai-Lama—Grand Lama—who is the head of the Buddhist Church.

29. *Chinese Wall*. Runs along the frontier of China for nearly 1,500 miles, in some places thirty feet high and twenty-five feet broad.

PAGE 90. 12. *Lama*. Priest.

24. *pontiff*. Chief priest. Generally applied to the Pope—the Sovereign Pontiff.

35. *howling wilderness*. *Howling*—of wild beasts. Deut. xxxii. 10.

PAGE 92. 15. *the Sultan*. Mustapha III, Sultan of Turkey, 1757–74.

PAGE 93. 25. *paladins*. Princes. Originally applied to the Knights of Charlemagne.

41. *ukase*. Edict.

PAGE 94. 19. *barbarous religion*. Buddhism, a religion held by four hundred millions of people—more than a quarter of the population of the globe—was the creed of many nations that had reached civilization centuries before the inhabitants of this island had ceased staining themselves with woad and appeasing their gods with human sacrifices.

26. *Mometbacha*. One of Oubacha's generals.

27. *Bashkirs*. A Tartar people that had revolted from Russia and joined the Sultan in the recent war (p. 92).

34. *Catherine II*. Empress of Russia, 1762-96. One of the ablest of Russian sovereigns. She did much to develop both literature and commerce, and during her reign the territory of Russia was largely increased by the annexation of the Crimea and the partition of Poland.

PAGE 98. 20. *Kirghises*. A Tartar people, afterwards subject to Russia. *Bashkirs*. See p. 94, l. 27.

PAGE 99. 35. *Temba*. Emba.

PAGE 105. 11. *Huns*. Invaded Europe in the fourth and fifth centuries. Under Attila they forced the Emperor Theodosius to treat for peace. They were ultimately subdued by Charlemagne.

Arars. Invaded Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries.

12. *Mongol Tartars*. Founded the Mongolian Empire, and invaded Europe in the thirteenth century. The term Tartar has been extended to peoples of Turkish origin, inhabiting Poland, the Caucasus, and Siberia.

23. *rials of wrath*. Rev. xv. 7 and xvi. 1. In Revised Version 'bowls'.

PAGE 106. 10. *the Peloponnesian War*. Between Athens and Sparta, 431-404 B. C.

London. The Great Plague of 1664-66.

18. *Vespasian*. Afterwards Emperor of Rome, A. D. 70-9. He besieged Jerusalem without success during the reign of Nero. His son Titus continued the siege when his father became Emperor, and captured the city in A. D. 70.

24. *maternal love*. Josephus in his account of the siege of Jerusalem (*Jewish Wars*, VI. iii. 201-19) mentions a mother who was driven by famine to kill and devour her own child.

31. *Jaik*. Ural.

PAGE 107. 14. *scenical*. Cf. p. 33, l. 9, and p. 83, l. 1.

38. *acharnement*. Furious obstinacy.

PAGE 108. 12. *by wholesale*. Wholesale originally meant the selling of a whole piece; then the selling of a large

quantity; and is now applied as an adjective or adverb to anything done in a large way.

15. *Cossacks*. A people in the south and east of Russia who are employed largely as cavalry in the Russian army.

36. *Bactrian*. The two-humped species of central Asia.

PAGE 110. 9. *champaign savannahs*. Grassy plains.

PAGE 111. 7. '*trashed*.' Checked.

24. *Weseloff*. See p. 119.

PAGE 112. 26. *in reversion*. See p. 65, l. 24.

PAGE 113. 1. *Ouchim*. Ichim.

8. *sections of five*. The usual load is two.

28. *Polish*. Used as a military term for heavy-armed.

PAGE 114. 5, 6. *Bashkirs, Kirghises*. See p. 94, l. 27, and p. 98, l. 10.

39. *aggravations*. In its strict sense of additional burdens.

PAGE 115. 1. *howling wilderness*. See p. 90, l. 35.

PAGE 116. 3. *adust*. Dried up by heat.

12. *those of Xerxes*. When Xerxes watched his army crossing the Hellespont to invade Greece in 480 B.C., he was moved to tears by the reflection that in a hundred years every man of that vast host would be dead.

25. *scapegoat*. A person who suffers for sins committed by others—from the goat on which once a year the Jewish High Priest laid the sins of the people, and which was then allowed to 'escape' into the wilderness (Levit. xvi. 21).

PAGE 117. 19, 20. *land of promise, house of bondage*. As Canaan and Egypt were to the Israelites. Genesis xvii. 8; Exodus xiii. 14.

31. *Oriembourg*. Orenburg.

PAGE 118. 11. *transpiring*. Becoming known. Often wrongly used to mean happening.

PAGE 120. 21. *Hetman*. Captain.

PAGE 123. 10. *Desultors*. Performers in the Roman circus who used to leap from one horse to another.

PAGE 124. 6. *circumstantially*. See p. 56, l. 7.

15. '*more fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea*.' Shakespeare, *Othello*, v. ii. 361. *Fell*, cruel.

PAGE 125. 1. '*fierce varieties*.' Perhaps a misquotation for '*fierce extremes*' (Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 599; vii. 272).

2. '*post equitem sedet atra cura*.' 'Behind the rider sits black care.' Horace, *Odes*, iii. 1. 40.

3. *undying worm*. Mark ix. 48.

13. 'from morn to dewy eve.' Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 742-3.

'From morn to noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve.'

37. *countermarches*. Marches back on their previous route.

PAGE 126. 13. *K'ien Long*. Emperor of China, 1775-95.

28. *by accident*. For discrepancies here and in other places between De Quincey's account and the state paper given in *Mémoires concernant les Chinois*, see Masson's Appendix in vol. vii of the Collective Edition of De Quincey's works published by Messrs. Black.

38. *yagers*. Here, riflemen. German, *Jäger*.

PAGE 127. 8. *fetching a compass*. Taking a circuitous route.

27. 'indorsed' *with*. Carrying on their backs. Milton, *Paradise Regained*, iii. 329.

PAGE 129. 11. *increasing*. Two lines that diverge at an angle of 45° from the same point do continually increase their distance from one another. But, as the two lines represented by the *cortège* and the Kalmucks did not start from the same point, they must have been converging for some time before they began to recede from one another.

13. *fresh-water lake*. Tengis (Balkash), however, is salt.

27. *Kobi*. Gobi.

PAGE 130. 23. *by wholesale*. See p. 108, l. 12.

PAGE 131. 5. *blood and gore*. De Quincey, though a master of style: is not always innocent of tautology.

PAGE 132. 1. 'globes' and 'turms'. Bands and squadrons. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 512; *Paradise Regained*, iv. 66.

31. *Ily*. Ili.

36. 'La nation,' &c. 'The Torgouts arrived utterly shattered, destitute alike of food and clothing. Foreseeing this I had made arrangements for their relief. Each family was assigned land for cultivation or pasturage. Each individual was given clothing, a year's supply of corn, domestic utensils and other things, and money. Fertile plots were marked out, and cattle and sheep were given to them, to provide means for their future support and comfort.' Torgouts—see note on Kalmuck, p. 159.

PAGE 133. 21. 'Lorsqu'ils,' &c. 'Several hundred thousands arrived at our frontier, reduced to the last extreme of misery and destitution, but what with fatigue, hunger, thirst, and the innumerable hardships inseparable from a long and trying journey, as many again had perished on the way. The Emperor provided them with suitable habitations; distributed food and clothing; and gave them cattle, sheep,

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